

Mary Ann Tilgate

A N N A;

O R

M E M O I R S

O F A

WELCH HEIRESS.

VOL. I.

A N N A;

OR

M E M O I R S

OF A

WELCH HEIRESS.

INTERSPERSED WITH

A N E C D O T E S

OF A

N A B O B.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED FOR LUKE WHITE.

M.DCC.LXXXVI.



T O
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS
Charlotte - Augusta - Matilda,
PRINCESS ROYAL
OF
ENGLAND.

M A D A M,

IT is with the most exalted sense of the sacred respect due to your amiable character, that I presume to dedicate to your Royal Highness the following sheets; but
although

vi DEDICATION.

although I am equally sensible of the very humble pretensions in my trifling production, I beg leave to aver, I am divested of every selfish inducement: even the reception in the world of this first effort of my pen, loses its interest in my wishes, while the stronger one of bearing public testimony to the virtues of a beloved Princess is gratified.

Most attractively adorned, as you are, by the first of all graces, modesty, fear not, Madam, I can take the advantage of example from time immemorial, and obtrude on you, under the sanction of a Dedication, compliments your judgment will condemn, or flattery your understanding will despise. Simple truth, in the language of sincerity, is your best eulogium; the highest panegyric on your character, are

DEDICATION. vii

are the sentiments of a whole Nation: What can fame add to your praise, when it is confessed the sons of Britain are proud to admire, and her daughters to emulate, you. The love and veneration of British subjects must be the voluntary offering of their hearts: and those are all warmly devoted to you.

The world, Madam, feels you are beautiful; it knows you are good:—but there is a yet more inestimable, though perhaps less brilliant, part of your character; you are the comfort and pride of your Royal Parents; the idol of your Family. The brightest Jewel of the Court, the graces of whose person gives, but cannot receive, lustre from the most splendid ornaments, is in the domestic circle, in family endearments

ments, still more lovely, and still more beloved: time must mature the wisdom, it must add experience, to the graces of your mind: You must yourself become a mother, before your Royal Highness can justly estimate the value of your own character.

The justice, the goodness, the mercy of your Royal Father, are in you, Madam, visibly blended with the elegance, sweetness and virtue of the best, as well as first, of women. Continue, charming Princess, to follow her example: it points invariably to every female excellence; it leads to immortality.

Few authors in my very humble line send their productions into the world without rendering their Heroines too perfect
for

D E D I C A T I O N. ix

for human nature; but, partial as, I confess, I have been to mine, with such living models as those growing to maturity in the British court before me, and constant as is my humble admiration and observation whenever their public appearance gives me opportunity; the wonder will be I have not brought the Welch Heiress nearer perfection.

Permit an orphan, Madam, to find an asylum at your feet; she is young, virtuous, and friendless: — the vicissitudes of her fortune are many of them taken from real life. You, Madam, in the bosom of maternal love, of royal as well as paternal affection, will, if she has the honour of being perused, meet some characters your own genuine innocence and honour will announce outré and unnatural; and,

as

x DEDICATION.

as experience of the remorseless cruelty, the deceit, ingratitude, and design of one part of the world cannot be attained without the accompaniments of sorrow and regret, you will always, I trust, remain in the belief, that the dark shades in my picture exist only in a soured imagination; while every sentiment of benevolence, delicacy and generosity, if such are to be found in Anna, will be sure to meet your approbation; because such are the spontaneous growth of your own amiable disposition; — and whether the vice, the folly, and the injustice Anna Mansel encountered, be fiction, or not, we glory in the conviction that the virtues, the graces, and beauty our nation boasts, are real: we know where the assemblage of female perfections are to be found.

As

DEDICATION. xi

As one, among the multitude, whose sincere affection and loyal attachment is their pride, permit me, Madam, to offer up prayers, not less ardent from my humble station, that the happiness of the Royal Offspring may equal their merits; and that Your Royal Highness, in particular, may long live with numberless additions to, but not one diminution from, your present peace and honour:—This is an universal prayer thousands will be sure to join in with,

Madam,
Your Royal Highness's
Most faithful,
Obedient,
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Humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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C H A P T E R. I.

A Scene of Mortality.

THE latter end of September, Mrs. Clarke, a widow woman, whose narrow circumstances obliged her to let lodgings, was so fortunate (as she then termed it) to have her apartments taken at her own price, by a very good-looking middle-aged man; who, to obviate any doubts that she might have respecting his being a stranger, advanced a month's rent, and preparing her to receive a sick woman and a child, desired her to provide a nurse for the former, as she engaged to superintend all the attendance he wished for himself and the latter: and having given her a couple of guineas to lay out in what necessaries might be immediately wanting, left her, to fetch the woman and child.

The stranger had dropped no hint that the person who was to occupy the apartment was his wife, neither had he said, she was not so—Mrs. Clarke was scrupulous and particular in her own principles; but her lodgings were empty; they had unluckily been so all the summer; the winter

was approaching ; during that season she had seldom tenants for them, and necessity rendered her less inquisitive than in more easy circumstances she would have been ; she was prevented asking questions, by the fear of having them answered in a way that would oblige her to forego an advantage she could not well do without.

In two hours from the time he left her, a hackney coach set down at her door an elderly woman, in the last stage of a consumption, a pretty little girl of three or four years old, a portmanteau, a small trunk, and the aforesaid gentleman. Luckily, Mrs. Clarke was a woman who made a point of fulfilling her engagements ; for the assiduity with which she had prepared their rooms, and procured a nurse, was rendered necessary by the extreme weakness of the poor invalid, who was directly got to bed, and a neighbouring apothecary summoned to her assistance.

The gentleman, with apparent concern, waited his decision, and on a physician being recommended, begged (being, as he said, a stranger) the apothecary would give him the address of the most eminent ; adding, that he would go himself to procure his immediate attendance. As soon as he was furnished with directions, he set off in haste, accompanied by the apothecary, and Mrs. Clarke was beginning to scrape acquaintance with her little charge, when her attention was called to a bustle at her door, where, she met, to her surprise and concern, Mr. Linton, the apothecary, returning, assisted by some accidental passengers, with the lifeless body of her new lodger : a vein was immediately opened, but without effect, a fit of apoplexy had put a period to his existence ; he breathed no more.

The confusion such an event raised in the house, reached the sick person, and the nurse incautiously
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telling her the cause, it threw her into faintings, from which she never recovered sufficiently to speak to be understood, although she lived three days.

Among others whose curiosity was excited by this awful and fatal circumstance, was the Rev. John Dalton, a popular preacher belonging to a Methodist conventicle in the neighbourhood—Mrs. Clarke as well as the nurse were his constant hearers, and begged his prayers with the dying woman; who, a short time before she expired, gave proofs she was sensible of his sacred function and her own situation, by making signs to have the infant and trunk brought her, both which she put into his hands, and appearing then more composed and resigned, was, in a few moments, released out of her pain.

The trunk appeared heavy enough to quiet in some measure the apprehensions of the reverend teacher; otherwise, the sacred bequest, and the solemn manner in which it was made, would not have been the most acceptable thing in the world to him—Poor Mrs. Clarke, as soon as she found she could not disturb the dying woman, began loudly to lament, herself, at having a couple of people to bury, of whose names, connections, and even country, she was ignorant, and whose baggage was too trifling to answer the funeral expences, which would half ruin her to defray, having a very small pension, as widow of a carpenter of a man of war, and what she could make of her lodgings, to support herself and daughter, who she had put apprentice to a milliner.

This reflection suggested the idea of searching the pockets of both the deceased: in the man's was found a gold watch and chain, with three seals, viz. a coat of arms, a crest, and a cypher, H. T. seven guineas, some silver, and a small key, which

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Dalton took as belonging to the trunk, and having half opened it, he shut it again immediately, declaring it was full of old papers which he would look over when he got home, and as it had pleased the Lord thus signally to deprive the innocent child of its natural friends, he would take the present care of her himself.

To be sure, he had a large family of his own, and hard enough he found it to support them; but what of that? Deeds of charity, like those of virtue, were their own reward; nay, he would go farther, he would take what effects there were, and pay all the expences of their respective funerals, and every other that was already incurred: if there was enough to reimburse him it was well; if not, God would pay him—The women were lost in admiration of his piety and charity, when, to avoid the censures of evil minded people, he directed them to take an inventory of the things the property of the defuncts; a prudent precaution, though not absolutely necessary, for the witnesses were well acquainted from memory with every particular, but that which he said required none, viz. the small trunk, which he suffered not to go out of his own hands.

Having given what farther directions he thought proper, a coach was ordered, in which he conveyed the child, the trunk, and himself to his own habitation.

When Mr. Dalton said, he had a large family of his own, he had (which was not always the case) spoke the truth; having a fat, handsome wife, five daughters, and two sons, with a small income, so that when he got home, Mrs. Dalton was not over sensible of the necessity there was for this extraordinary exertion of a charitable disposition in her husband; to say the truth, though nobody could preach it better, or enforce it with

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stronger arguments, there was very little of that meek eyed virtue in the Doctor's (as he was called) practice: it is therefore not to be wondered, Mrs. Dalton was both angry and surprised at this first instance of that amiable virtue: he soon, however, contrived to reconcile her to the trouble and expence of this little addition to her family, and when after communing with her husband, she looked at the sweet baby then asleep, it was so lovely, and had something so genteel, so above the common run of children about it, not to feel for its distress was impossible: she had children of her own, and God knew how soon she might be taken from them; she would therefore certainly be a mother to the dear innocent—It was accordingly put to bed, after which Mr. Dalton and his rib, whether from the consciousness of a right act, or from any other pleasing occurrence of the day, spent the remainder of the evening in high good humour with each other, adding to their usual draught of porter, a bason of warm punch, and retired to rest with better spirits than they had ever before done.

The next morning introduced our little heroine in a very engaging light to her new acquaintance; she had been long immured, without room to exercise, or play-fellows to amuse her; Dalton's children were three of them of an age to be her companions, and they had a large garden to range in; delighted with such a pleasing change, she prattled and caressed them by turns, exhibiting in her lively fallies great good humour and visible traces of having received her first impressions in genteel life.

Unconscious of the loss she had sustained, and intoxicated with the dolls and toys (though not very costly ones) with which the Daltons abounded, she thought of nothing else till bed time; then a

heartly cry after papa and nurse for some time rendered her fractious ; but sleep soon silenced her little sorrow : for some days bed time was her hour of affliction ; but that wearing off by degrees, all memory of the past was lost, nor could they by any exertion in their power draw from her the surname of her parents ; her own, she told them, was Anna ; if she wanted any thing, it was, “ give “ it Anna,” or “ let Anna have it,” but her ideas were so infantine, they could learn nothing from her innocent talk that could lead to any discovery of where she came from or who she belonged to : as she never mentioned a mother, they concluded the woman who died to be her nurse, and the man her father, both of whom were decently interred ; and in a week after, an advertisement was inserted in one of the morning papers by Mr. Dalton in the following terms :

“ Whereas, on the 29th day of September, a
 “ man and woman took a lodging in the Hampstead
 “ Road, where the man died of an apoplectic fit
 “ the same day, and the woman of the fright
 “ occasioned by it, leaving a female child ; who-
 “ ever are related to the said man or woman and
 “ will take the child away, may apply to the Rev.
 “ John Dalton, Tottenham-court Road.”

My reader may perhaps conceive the contents of the trunk might have put the parson in a surer method of finding who the orphan belonged to, but in that they are mistaken, for it contained no sort of information of that kind, or indeed any other but what he fully resolved to conceal with the most guarded secrecy, and that was, the exact sum of fourteen hundred guineas, in fourteen small canvass bags, all marked 100l. alike, save that in one, besides the money, were three valuable diamond rings, a lock of hair folded up in
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awn paper with "My ever dear Anna's, H. T." wrote on it.

I wish I could with truth say, these things were concealed with a laudable intention of restoring them, or that his inquiries after the child's original were made with that earnestness it would, had those valuables not been in Dalton's possession—But I fear the reverse will be proved—the temptation was strong, the tempted weak; avarice is a dangerous, it is an encroaching vice: Dalton had not any immediate intention of converting to his own use the money; but when once the glittering bait was secure in his possession, no witness or person to demand it but an innocent child, who could not now possibly want it, how difficult for a greedy heart, such as that of Dalton, to be just, when justice would have deprived him of fourteen hundred guineas, and arguments being ready to corroborate our own partial ideas, this pair persuaded themselves, in retaining money they could at any time restore, they were not injuring any other person, while they were materially benefiting their own family.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

A Methodist Preacher.

MR. John Dalton, whom I have introduced so early to my readers, will cut so considerable a figure in the succeeding pages, that I think it necessary they shall know something more of the person with whom they are likely to be more intimately acquainted.

He was the son of a journeyman carpenter, in a large town in South Wales, and being a boy of an active turn, was admitted into a free grammar-school by the Preceptor, for the double purpose of cleaning his shoes and sweeping the school room: here he picked up a smattering of the dead languages, and by a servile attention to the son of a dignified clergyman, afterwards bishop of the diocese, got so much into his good graces, that by his means he was, to the surprise of every body who knew him, ordained.

A late celebrated Methodist teacher was, it is known, fond of procuring men for his mission who were in orders; and Dalton, considering, perhaps, a prophet has no honour in his own country, where, indeed, he had not the least prospect of even a cure, pleaded a call of the spirit, and inlisting under his banner, was ordered to a town in the west of England; there he succeeded so well, as to get a good livelihood, and so ingratiated himself into the favour of a widow of good circumstances, that after various considerations, she waved her first intentions of taking the good man for her bodily as well as her spiritual guide herself,

self, in favour of her daughter, a pretty innocent girl of sixteen, with a thousand pounds left her by her father; indeed some people affirm, the old lady having her income during her widowhood only, was the reason the Doctor did such violence to his spiritual feelings, as to accept for his helpmate, a young creature, who had not yet professed the religion of which he was so fervent a supporter, when it was well known he might have contracted himself to a holy matron, whose mornings, evenings, and even midnights, were often devoted to the pious service of the church.

But whatever was his inducement, the simple fact was as I have related it; he married the young woman with the approbation of her mother. He was not, however, equally fortunate in that of the few inhabitants of the place, who did not profess Methodism, and who chose to testify their dislike of the old lady's disposal of her handsome daughter, by taking some liberties with her house and windows not quite within the letter of the law.—Nor were they more ceremonious with the Doctor, who had the mortification of seeing the tabernacle razed with the ground, and of being obliged to quit, under cover of the night, his friends and fellow-sufferers.

A thousand pounds in his pocket, and a handsome wife in his hand, were not sins of so crying a nature in the eyes of his Chief in London, as they had been in those of the ignorant west-country folks—He found himself not worse received for the persecution he had undergone, and he had soon reason to rejoice at an event which established him in one of the first meetings in London.

Here, then, the powers of Dalton had their full scope—To a strong voice, a primitive look, a lank thin person, and a large wig, he added the cunning and cant of an itinerant preacher, and with

those qualifications, soon became the favourite of all the old women and maids who frequented his conventicle—His wife, ignorant and uninformed, caught the prejudices as well as manners of those she associated with, thought her husband the very saint he professed himself; bred every year, grew fat and indolent, despising with her lips the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, whilst a gay gown or a smart cap could at any time, steal her attention from her prayers; and the joy of her heart was good eating and drinking: in this she was very often indulged by the continual entertainments to which they were invited by the disciples of her husband.

She was a good mother, a faithful wife, and, considering the company she kept, a sincere friend; harmless and inoffensive by nature, she was taught to believe it meritorious, if her right cheek was smote by her husband, to turn to him her left also: his will was the law of her actions; and as his darling pursuit was money, and his constant theme to her the distress she and her family would be exposed to if he died before her, she imperceptibly imbibed an avaricious turn, not because it was her disposition but his.

The thousand pounds, her fortune, had been no otherwise changed than in the transfer from the name of her guardians to his; and most years he contrived, what with collections and presents, to make both ends meet without touching the interest.

Indeed his talents and industry were mutually calculated to make the most of every possible advantage that offered; and while his hearers fancied, they were forwarding their own salvation by their liberality to the preacher, he was most assiduously laying in wait for every avenue to their consciences that could be turned to his own interest—

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If a taylor was seized with a devout fit, he was soon given to understand, what a disgrace to the congregation it was, to see their minister in so shabby a coat; did a hosier invite him to dinner, ten to one, but the reverend visitor had holes visibly coaxed in his stockings; and a linen-draper was sure to see him in a dirty shirt, because his stock was too small to last round a week's wash; then his large family was a constant topic, and his small income ever in high lamentation against quarter day. Many and various were the shifts and inventions of this good man to lay his flock under contribution, in which he was so successful, that he has been known to be selling in one part of the town, what he had begged in the other; constantly saying, "He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord."

But, notwithstanding so divine a tenet continually on his lips, nothing could be farther from his heart than the idea, that preaching and practice should go together. At the time our little heroine was thrown in his way he was wavering between two points, each of them leading to the grand concern of his life, *money*.

A builder, who had taken a large space of ground, where he had engaged to erect several houses, had laid the foundation of a chapel, which he offered Dalton, on consideration of his advancing one thousand pounds towards finishing it, and to share the profits between them.

The plan was flattering and the harvest, if it succeeded, immense—He calculated the number it would hold; the price of the tickets for the different pews, with the profits of the burials and the visitations, and his heart bounded at the sum it would produce. On the other hand, if it should not succeed, what would become of his thousand pounds

pounds sunk in the building, where both principal and interest would be lost?

In such a dilemma any prudent man would be cautious, but Dalton was miserable—*He*, no sooner (elated with the hope of obtaining riches) resolved on the partnership, than the fear of parting with his money rent his very soul, and under the dominion of that fear, the instant he resolved to keep it in safety where it was, than the chapel, finished, consecrated, and filled, presented itself with all its profits and emoluments to his tortured imagination.

At this critical period, chance, which he misnamed providence, put it in his power to gratify his wishes and preserve untouched his own property; one only difficulty started, should the child be owned and the money claimed:—well, if that happened, how could it be proved he had it? The person who had intrusted it to him was no more capable of giving positive evidence; and the glorious uncertainty of the law admitted not, in pecuniary matters, of a circumstantial one: he could not then, be obliged to pay the money till quite convenient to himself; and when it was, he assured his wife he would refund it without being obliged: this point being settled, the money was advanced to the builder, viz. one thousand pounds; the remainder put into the Bank, and Dalton happy in the accomplishment of more than he had dared to wish for.

C H A P. III.

The Methodist continued.

DALTON had many reasons for enjoining secrecy to the builder ; and in order to be out of the way of impertinent inquirers, of which number was Mrs. Clarke, who felt herself so much interested in the fate of our orphan, that she let not a day pass without visiting her, nor ever went but with some little purchase of cakes, fruits or toys, he resolved to move his residence, as the keeping alive the remembrance of the event that had been in its consequences so pleasing to him, was, of all things, what he least desired.

Mrs. Clarke he could not affront, for she had more claims than one on his civility ; poor and necessitous as was her circumstances, she was always very liberal to him ; and whenever her purse would afford a bit of any thing better than common, it was shared with Mrs. Dalton.

Although a religious woman, she was far from being offensively strict in her actions or conversation ; and so certain was Dalton of the integrity of her disposition, that he ventured to indulge himself at her house in a luxury he could not, for fear of discovery, enjoy at his own. All his prayers and self-denials had not been able to conquer a love he in his early days had imbibed for a game of whist ; it had been endeared to him when a school-boy, by supplying his pocket ; and as he had played with tolerable success, the picking up
of

of a few pence rendered it still a desirable amusement: for this gratification, he relaxed a little with his staunch friend, Mrs. Clarke, who conceiving no sin in playing a game of cards herself, was the readier to acquit him of this matter. Harmless as it was, he was in continual dread of discovery; and all his views now centering in the dear chapel, he resolved to move near it, and by that means drop his friend, and be on the spot an eye-witness to the rapidity of its improvements.

An inducement to this step soon after occurred, as unwelcome as unexpected; cautious as he had been in the chapel scheme, it somehow or other transpired, and reached the ears of his employer, whose good will towards his deputies, so far from following the prosperous only, always decreased as they rose in the estimation of their respective congregations.

He had seen with the eye of jealousy, the crouds that attended Dalton's meeting, and dreading the growing popularity of a rival, so eligibly situated as the new chapel promised, contrived to pick a religious quarrel with our adventurer; and having proved before a select vestry, that the reverend John Dalton had rendered himself unworthy of the rank he held in their sect, by profanely playing three games at cards in the house of Martha Clarke, he was dismissed the society in disgrace; and this sentence was read publicly in all the devout assemblies in the kingdom, as well as that of his associate, Mrs. Clarke, who, to her infinite sorrow, was excommunicated.

This terrible blow was followed by one much more so; the builder, to whom he advanced the thousand pounds, decamped, without performing any part of his contract, leaving the chapel unfinished, and what was still worse, without giving the

the poor parson a clear title to the premises, thereby putting it out of his power (had he been so inclined) to employ another person to complete what the first had so inauspiciously begun.

It has been said, if, in the worst of misfortunes we were to seek consolation from reason, we should feel a relief, in some shape or other, from the very evil that afflicts us—Thus Mr. Dalton, and consequently his wife, found comfort in reflecting, it was not their own money they had lost; they were yet four hundred guineas in pocket; nor was this all, for a jolly good-humoured clergyman of the church of England, more benevolent than strict, and more compassionate than pious, hearing of Dalton's misfortune, and that he had a very large family, who were involved in their father's distress, after some few inquiries into his morals and capability, engaged him as his curate, in a populous part of the town, at a settled salary of sixty pounds per annum, and sent his eldest boy to Christ's Hospital.

This event was considered by the Daltons as the greatest piece of good fortune; and as they were now to move in a more eligible sphere, an hundred pounds more was expended in furniture, cloaths, and other necessaries; so that the traces of the poor Methodist parson was no longer seen in their appearance.

He was then treated with more respect by the world in general; and as he kept to the kind of preaching he was accustomed to, it brought a full congregation to the church where he officiated; what he was deficient in, in point of learning and abilities, appeared to be made up by his religious zeal, and recommended him to the parishioners, to whom he pleaded his poverty, and large family, in a genteeler style, but with the same success he
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had before done among the more scrupulous sect from whom he had been discharged with such marks of holy abhorrence.

C H A P. IV.

An Accident.

WHEN Mrs. Dalton was settled in her new habitation, her intended inquiries for a school for her daughters were anticipated by a large board, signifying in gilt letters over the side door of a chandler's shop, that "Yong ladeys were hedi-cated here;" with a "N. B. dancing tout; and the Miss Daltons being now unquestionably young ladies, they, together with Anna, were sent to this seminary of education; which consisted in spelling, badly, words of two syllables, with needle-work in proportion. As to dancing, it was neither agreeable to Dalton's professions, or suitable to his finances, to have his children learn that; though Anna was continually holding out her frock, and making courtesies to tempt him—Her lively genius gave early specimens of what it was capable of, compassing what learning the school afforded with incredible rapidity; ever first at book and work, she was likewise first at play: and here, since an opportunity of speaking to their good name will seldom offer, let me do justice to Mr. Dalton and his wife, who shewed not the least partiality to their own children, but treated the little orphan with equal tenderness, care, and affection, which

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was returned by her with the same fondness they experienced from their own.

Anna continued here without any material incident either to them or her, three years, improving every day ; she was a fine chubby little girl, when they took her first, but she then began to promise something more ; her features were regular and handsome, her complexion clear, and her countenance so inexpressibly pleasing, that though a great romp, she was a general favourite, particularly with the governess, as the person was called who received her sixpence every Monday—Her sampler was exhibited as a pattern of good work, and with what very poor instructions it was in the woman's power to give her, she read with such ease and propriety, as astonished both Dalton and his wife.

At this period, an accident happened, that gave a new turn to the fortune of my heroine—Running with more agility than care, across the street from school, which she had often done, without a guide, her foot slipped, and a gentleman's coach driving furiously along, the coachman could not pull in his horses time enough to prevent her being thrown down, and receiving several violent bruises—The lady who was in the carriage was possessed of great good nature and humanity ; she expressed the strongest concern for the child ; attended it home, where she continued in the most tender anxiety, till a surgeon had pronounced it out of danger ; when she left her with five guineas, and an assurance of calling next day : she was as good as her word, and continued to see the little angel (as she called her) every morning, till she was entirely recovered from the ill effects of her fall.

Mrs. Melmoth found in the uncommon loveliness of Anna, something that attracted her attention when humanity had no farther plea to offer ;

fer ; and her partiality for the charming child raised the curiosity of her husband, at whose request she solicited Mr. Dalton's leave to carry her home to dinner, promising to return her in the evening.

Propitious to my heroine was this visit ; her engaging innocence, added to that nameless something, every body feels but none can describe in an ingenuous countenance, together with the very pertinent answers she made to the little questions put, endeared her to her new friends so excessively, it was with reluctance they restored her to the Daltons, as Mrs. Melmoth promised.

Again and again was she fetched, and always returned loaded with finery and toys, inasmuch, that the little Daltons were equipt with her superfluities—A better school, at the desire of her benefactress, was sought for, and all the expences defrayed by her.

When the Parliament broke up, Mrs. Melmoth, though a very fine lady, declared her chief regret at leaving London, was parting from her Anna ; and embracing her with tears, asked if she would come to see her.

Dalton saw with unspeakable satisfaction, the fondness of this lady for his ward, as there appeared a prospect of wholly getting rid of her ; for if Mrs. Melmoth took it into her head, once to take her entirely under her protection, he should not only save her keeping, but as in that case she would never want it, her fortune also.

He, therefore, seized the opportunity, while the benevolent heart of Mrs. Melmoth was melting in the warm effusions of affection she felt for Anna, of expatiating on the mercy of that Providence, who provided for the fatherless and destitute, and which had raised, *in her*, so kind a friend to an unhappy orphan.

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The lady, who had always taken Anna for his daughter, was surprised at this speech, and called on him, as he expected, and meant she should, for a farther explanation—He told the tale with what reservations was necessary to his own interest, and what additions would most set off his own great charity, as well as work most effectually on the passions of his fair auditor.

Mrs. Melmoth felt herself exceedingly interested for her Pet; and had she followed the first motion of her own inclinations, would have immediately taken her under her protection; but a moment's thought bade her defer it till she had consulted her husband, from whose indulgence she had every reason to expect a coincidence with her wishes, but without whose approbation she never took any step of consequence; her silence, and quitting town without the least hint of any such future intentions, made Dalton suppose the gudgeon had not bit.

Mr. Melmoth had set out for the Lodge (his seat in Wiltshire) two days before his lady's last visit to Anna, having a relation at Bath he wished to see in his way down—As soon as Mrs. Melmoth joined him, she made him acquainted with the piteous story of Anna, which was graced by her tears, and delivered in a language that stole to the heart of her husband; and as they were not blessed with children, he anticipated her desires, and himself proposed taking the little orphan off the hands of the poor Parson.

Mr. Melmoth was a fond, a gallant, and a polite husband: to know what would make his wife happy, and to do it (if in his power) was one and the same thing to him—When she withdrew to dress, he hastily snatched up a pen, and wrote to Dalton as follows:

“SIR,

“ S I R,

“ Mrs. Melmoth is so charmed with your Anna, and interested in the story you was so good as to communicate concerning her, she will not be happy till we have her with us ; a stage sets out from the Saracen’s Head, Friday-street, which passes our house ; if no female passenger who is known at the inn, will take charge of her, you will be so good as to commit her to the care of a servant, and the sooner she sets off the more you will oblige,

S I R,

Your humble servant,

WM. MELMOTH.”

MELMOTH LODGE.

This was dispatched as soon as sealed, without taking any notice to Mrs. Melmoth, of what he had done, as he formed to himself great pleasure in agreeably surprising her with the sight of her *protégée*, before she knew he had sent for her.

Mr. Dalton was too much rejoiced at this *now* un hoped for letter, to defer an instant compliance with its contents : he immediately made the best of his way to the inn, where he was so lucky as to arrive at the moment a lusty, red-faced, elderly woman, was taking her own place, to go to the next town beyond Squire Melmoth’s, where, she told him, few people were better known, she believed, than Dame Plunket—As this exordium on herself was confirmed by the book-keeper, and as he was in too great a hurry to get rid of his charge, to be very nice about her company, he told her briefly, he had a child to send to Mrs. Melmoth, and that the squire had ordered it to be put under the care of some female passenger.

On hearing this, the countrywoman very readily undertook to deliver her at the Lodge ; and as
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the coach set off that evening, he returned in great haste to set Anna off also—But, notwithstanding the good fortune of Anna was announced to her, with every possible enlargement of the fine things she would have, and the happiness she should enjoy with the lady, who had been already so good to her, the idea of being taken away from Mrs. Dalton, to whom she so affectionately clung, that the good woman, reluctant before, was still more grieved at parting with her; and the leaving her young playmates and companions, filled her little heart with unspeakable anguish; she sobbed and wept, nor could all the encouraging things said by the whole family, banish from her affectionate bosom her regrets at leaving them.

Mrs. Dalton, on her part, besought her husband not to send her away: the expence of keeping such a good little creature was a trifle they should not be sensible of; she even ventured to throw out some hints of justice—But I have before said, his will was her law: unaccustomed to pay the least regard to her opinion, except, as indeed was most generally the case, it was exactly his own, it was not likely he should begin such an unnecessary piece of complaisance, on an occasion, where his own views and interest were so opposite to those principles of humanity and good nature, by which his wife was actuated in her request to detain the child.

His arguments were, that she was a mere woman, and a great fool; that she did not know what was good for herself, and which, indeed, was sufficient to end a much greater contest—*He* knew best, ergo, the child must go.

C H A P. V.

An agreeable Companion in a Stage Coach.

MRS. Plunket was a notable bustling woman, who having so far transgressed the rules of decency herself, as to have been the mother of several children previous to her marriage with her late, or any other husband, was for fixing the value of her own present virtuous life by a comparative view of the faults of others, and so indefatigable was she in her inquiries after the little blemishes of her neighbours, that not even the personal appearance of those children could remind her of the reproach she herself was liable to; all memory of her own errors were swallowed up in the exact register of those of other people.

Her curiosity was insatiable: she was a general enemy to unblemished fame, and an universal retailer of every piece of scandal in the vicinity of her dwelling.—She was brought up in the late Mr. Melmoth's kitchen, who, being a widower some time before his death, was indolently indulgent to his servants, and had suffered this woman to continue her place, though her yearly excursions were but too visible even to him.—The young squire not being quite so passive, she was discharged as soon as he came to the estate, and the former Mrs. Plunket dying soon after, was made an honest woman by the reputed father of her children, who was likewise a dependent at the Lodge and had saved money enough to set up a large country shop; but the indignity she had suffered in

in her dismissal from the Lodge she never forgot, though the scandal which occasioned it was not remembered ; and as long as she lived, if an opportunity offered of shewing her rancour towards the son of the man in whose service her husband had enriched himself, she failed not, as far as she dared, embracing it ; she was therefore not only gratifying a common, but a malignant curiosity, by inquiring, with an affected good humour, into every particular about Anna.—“ Dear me, what a lovely child ! How could they part with it ! But she supposed they had more.”—On being told by Mrs. Dalton, who accompanied Anna to the inn, it was not her own—“ Indeed ! what, a relation ? ” “ No, answered Dalton, “ it is an orphan Mrs. Melmoth has persuaded her husband to take off my hands.”

Another trial would have been made by the inquisitive dame, to have got farther into the history of her fellow traveller, had not the stage by drawing out, informed her there was no time—She accordingly, by the assistance of the coachman and porter, ascended the vehicle, and little Anna was torn from the neck of Mrs. Dalton to follow her.

When the door shut out her friends, and the carriage moved on, the cries of the child not a little disturbed Mrs. Plunket ; who, in an authoritative tone of voice, bid her cease her bawling ; which, though soothed by two other women passengers, so frightened Anna, that if she continued weeping, it was in silence ; and in a little while, the motion of the coach, with the late hour, threw her into a sound sleep, from which she awoke not till they stopt to breakfast.

She eat heartily, and though she yet felt the parting with Mrs. Dalton, the face of nature, which she had never before beheld, in fields and woods,

woods, with every other scene so perfectly new, diverted her attention; but she still remembered with disgust and fear, the commanding voice of Dame Plunket.—Being again seated in the coach, that active woman went to work, asking fifty questions—As where she lived—How old she was—Did she know Mrs. Melmoth and the Squire—How long was it since she had seen them?—The child, to her extreme mortification, either from dislike of the woman, a sudden fit of taciturnity, or *cunning*, preserved a most obstinate silence---It was in vain the Dame fought by fair means or foul to obtain the longed-for intelligence; she could get nothing out of her; and when, at last, provoked and enraged, she gave up the trial---“Augh, it was a deep one, she would warrant it---Finely schooled and instructed---But it would not do---People might shut their eyes---None were so blind as those that would not see---Madam Melmoth might carry her head as high as she pleased, and make a parade that ill became her---An orphan indeed!---There were full enough of her own blood she believed, *if* this was not one of them, to take all, and more than the Squire could spare---For her part, she hated upstart quality.”

In this declaration she was joined by her fellow travellers; who observed, those were a sort of gentry most apt to give themselves airs.

“Airs, indeed,” returned Dame Plunket, acquiring consequence in her own ideas from the attention of her companions, whose curiosity being excited, she condescended to give them the following history of Squire Melmoth and his family.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

A Family Picture by a discarded Servant.

“WHY, you be to know, my father and mother lived with father and grandfather of present Squire; nay, for that matter, I lived there myself, and Mr. Plunket lived there too, from generation to generation, as the saying is; but new lords new laws—Old master left this young one three thousand pounds a year, as good land as any in the country, (and all the young ladies fortunèd off, and master Billy dead;) but lord, he should ha’ been a parson; for, lord help him, a’ is but half saved—he is always a writing of books and verses and one nonsense or t’other; and then to be sure, instead of minding the justice business as old Squire did, and Quorum meetings, he must go to *Helmstone* a bathing, and a fell in with this fine madam, wi’ never had a fardin of fortune, for indeed how should she, her mother for fartin’s no better than she should be, and she, *saving the law*, a bit of a bastard, however though she had not a tester of her own, she could spend the Squire’s money fast enough; there’s one estate gone already; all the timber cut down, and the lodge over head and ears in debt, pulling down one house and putting up t’other, from country to town, and racketing all over the kingdom; then camping whoam, and flaunting it away, with as much finery on her back as would keep a decent family seven years; tired of her fine new house now she has got

it, while he, poor sap, says as she says—as long as he can be shut up, reading his *Canterbury Tales*, he does not care, not he; and now here is another whim, as thof' there was not poor children enow in Somersetshire.

“ I am sure, Madam Ashby, the Squire's sister, often and often said to me, Mrs. Plunket says she, these are sad doings of my Brother; and often and often I goes to she, and drinks tea with she; but I suppose t'other gewgaw thing would break her neck afore her silence to a poor body—“ Not so poor neither,” bridling,—“ thank God, I can pay every body their own, and that's a comfort.”

“ To be sure, so it is,” returned the two women, much obliged and delighted at the family history of a Parliament man; which, notwithstanding some exaggerations, being in the main true, I have given my readers in the words of the all-intelligent Dame Plunket.

Mr. Melmoth, as she said, inherited his estate, clear and unincumbered, and his lady had the double misfortune of being very poor and very handsome; she was young, lively, and agreeable, and being bred up at a watering place, had imbibed a taste for pleasure and expence, which her husband so far from restraining, gave the most indulgent way to: his rent roll he had not thought incumbent to shew her; and her thoughtlessness was but a copy of his own;—so that the wonder would have been, if, after a few years tonish living on the part of the lady, they had not been pretty much involved:—however, as they had no family, and his ideas were really, as Mrs. Plunket said, taken up in trips to Parnassus, they went on spending and mortgaging; few, very few people caring how soon they were ruined, although their extravagance was the talk of the country.

Mrs. Plunket was not as may be supposed, a favourite at the lodge: *they* were too good natured to
delight

delight in scandal, and too much engaged to stand in need of such despicable auxiliaries to help them to kill time.

But she made it up at the houses of some of the other branches of the Melmoth family, who, having none of Mrs. Melmoth's misfortunes, being rich, ugly and ill-natured, could not be cordially affectionate to her;—in fine, they hated her, her dress, her taste, equipage, and liveries; and, above all, her beauty rendered her at once an object of blame and envy.

Mrs. Plunket knew this too well to doubt whether a new instance of folly and expence would be acceptable, and therefore alighted about two miles on the London side of the lodge, at Mrs. Ashby's, to drop her news—pinning a paper to Anna, directed to Madam Melmoth at the lodge:—whether this was the invention of ignorance or impudence, or both, I will not say; but the appearance it carried when the stage stopped at the Squire's, set the house in an uproar.

Mr. Melmoth and his lady were both out; the latter having wrote that day for Anna, and the former, though he did not expect her so soon, enjoying in idea the agreeable surprise he had prepared for her.

Dalton, ever prudent and considerate, observed to his wife that as Anna was going to gentlefolks, a species of beings who seldom cared how their money went, and who certainly would soon buy her cloaths to their own taste, it was needless to send any with her;—besides bundles might be lost or mislaid;—what things she did not take would fit Polly; and such an extravagant lady as Madam Melmoth would not thank them for saving her money.

Mrs. Dalton had no power, or indeed inclination, to oppose arguments which left her in possession of

all the gay things given to her late ward; the child, therefore, was sent off, as I have related, with her whole wardrobe on her back.

The porter, who answered the stage coachman's ring at the gate, having no instruction from his master or mistress, was struck with astonishment at the sight of Anna, and the coachman's demand of the part of her fare left unpaid, as is usual at the inn in town!—A child he had never heard of: so sent and so directed, was indeed an extraordinary circumstance; and so much did it stagger him, that, before he would venture to receive our heroine within the gates or pay her carriage, he summoned the house-keeper, who was followed by all the maids, and they by the footmen. The porter thought it was a trick to palm the child on their master. "More likely to send him his own," cried the cook. "Like enough," answered a new footman from Madam's country: "you lived with his honour before he was married;" adding, with a significant wink, "Hap, Peggy you, may know the mother?" an insinuation, however indirect or obscure that implies a doubt of the chastity of a woman, who is conscious of not possessing any of that troublesome virtue, is not only never forgiven, but sure to be the object of spight and rancour to the person so offended.

Unluckily the private feelings of poor Margaret were but too fore—the consequently fired up;—"Why, how, now, Mr. Powdermonkey; you have opened your mouth and said nothing," retorted she, with an inflamed face and raised voice. "If the girl belonged to my master's side of the house, she would not hardly have been sent packing;—No, no," bridling, "we are no flinchers in Somersetsshire. The girl, I dare say, is Suffolk; she is as like madam as she can stare; and that I will say if I lose my place."

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The honour of John, now doubly wounded in the reflection on his mistress and the stigma on his country, would not suffer him patiently to endure such an affront; the majority of the servants being natives of the place, and of course siding with Margery, words ran high; Mr. John being supported only by Mrs. Kitty, the lady's maid, whose humble servant he was; for Mrs. Elton, the housekeeper, though mistress both of volubility and weight of argument, had, in most matters, so much to say on both sides, that it was difficult, and indeed impossible, to tell to which she was most partial, at least till the opinion of her superiors were known. In the midst of this clamour, every tongue going at once, it was in vain the coachman pressed to be discharged; they had now almost got beyond words; yet one point seemed to be determined on by both the contending powers, which was, that the girl could not belong to them.

The coachman obstinately persisted in leaving her; and they as obstinately refused to take her in.

Poor Anna, terrified at so many strange faces, all bending their inauspicious looks on her, screamed loudly, though she knew not why, as the coachman lifted her from the coach. Mrs. Melmoth's maid, who was her great favourite, having caught a fever the beginning of the winter in London, had been sent home for the air before Anna's accident; *she* therefore knew nothing about her; and the coachman and servants who had seen their mistress's fondness for her, were now out with them.

But at this instant it fortunately happened, that our heroine had one friend and acquaintance at Melmoth Lodge, to whose good offices she owed her not being turned into the street; this was an Italian grey-hound, between whom and Anna there subsisted a mutual affection; her screams, in a voice
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the favourite animal well knew, no sooner reached him, than he ran out and rejoiced the heart of his little acquaintance, who, in her transports at seeing Ninon, forgot all her tribulation, and thought only of careſſing her very ſeaſonable friend.

John took advantage of this circumſtance, which diſcovered the child to be known to his miſtreſs, and putting her under the care of Mrs. Kitty, promiſed to relate all that had been ſaid when his honour came home.

Thus the entrance of our heroine into Melmoth Lodge, whoſe own diſpoſition would have qualified her for the harbinger of peace and love, was hailed by the diſcord and ill-will of all its dependents.

Mrs. Elton would now fain have claimed ſome merit by her attention; but Mrs. Kitty told her, with a ſneer, that ſince the child was ſo like her miſtreſs, ſhe would keep her in the dreſſing-room till ordered to the contrary.

Tired with the long journey, and overpowered by ſleep, long before Mrs. Melmoth returned, Anna was dead to the cares which, in more advanced age, might have robbed her of reſt; from this happy inſenſibility ſhe was awoke by the fond and rapturous careſſes of her benefactreſs, who, on retiring to her room a little fatigued, was throwing herſelf on the ſofa, when ſhe beheld, faſt aſleep, and beautiful as an angel, her little Pet.

Mr. Melmoth immediately explained the myſtery, and received his wife's acknowledgement for his kind attention to her wiſhes; then turning again to the child, ſhe almoſt ſmothered her with her embraces. Anna was at firſt rather peeviſh; but as ſoon as quite awake, ſhe recollected Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth, her lively and innocent joy was as unbounded as ſincere, and gave the higheſt gratification to her friends, who every moment felt themſelves

more

more interested for her, and more pleased at their own generous adoption of so amiable a child.

The next morning Mr. Melmoth was made acquainted with the speeches of Margery, and those of her fellow servants who had sided with her;—the Squire, enraged at their insolent reflections on his lady, insisted immediately on dismissing them; and though the little kindness Anna had received from Mr. John and Mrs. Kitty was purely in opposition to the other servants, it was amply rewarded, as well by the commendations of their master and mistress as by more substantial proofs of their approbation.

Every body knows that the transactions of a great house in the country becomes more or less the immediate concern of every individual within the reach of its influence or example, particularly on such an occasion as removing domestics, whose natural connections are in the neighbourhood. Mr. Melmoth's cook, dairy and house maids, his groom-helper, and under gardener, found themselves much injured by that gentleman's chusing to discharge them; those injuries it was not necessary for them to keep secret; they were therefore communicated first to their relations, next to the servants of the adjacent great houses, and, lastly, to the heads of those great houses themselves, particularly to the relations of their late master: what were the candid comments of the neighbourhood of Melmoth Lodge, on this extraordinary exertion of benevolence and charity in its owners, will be seen in the succeeding pages.

C H A P. VII.

A plan for female Education.

MRS. Melmoth, with the vivacity that generally attends the new undertakings of a fine lady living in the country, whose amusements are principally calculated rather to pass away time than enjoy it, now set about cloathing our heroine; all her maids were employed, and a servant dispatched to Dame Plunket at the next market town, for the linen, and every other article her shop could supply, of the best sort and the highest price.

Mrs. Melmoth was no œconomist; the least thing she was acquainted with was the value of money; indeed but little of that article went through her hands, as the bills were paid by the steward; but there was a thing she was very clever at, and that was giving orders; Anna was therefore not only well stocked in all sorts of necessaries, but she abounded in superfluities; and the amount of Mrs. Plunket's bill was carefully conveyed to good Mrs. Ashby, and her confidential friends.

As soon as she was equipped, she became the constant companion of her patroness, who failed not to exhibit her to the best advantage; nor made any visits within a few miles of the lodge unattended by her Pet.

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At Mrs. Ashby's, however, and at some other ladies in the neighbourhood, she found an unaccountable coldness and a restrained civility that astonished her; all common messages in the family way were answered with a hauteur and caprice that appeared to Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth truly ridiculous, unconscious of giving them any cause for such an absurd change in their behaviour: they sought not an *eclaircissement*; their acquaintance with them declined gradually; and in a short time all communication between them and the ladies of the family wholly ceased.

The circle of their visits being by this means contracted, our heroine excited more both of their love and attention: an English governess was procured for her, whose character and abilities for the station she filled were attested by people of unquestionable honour; she was near forty, and had been so happy as to give satisfaction to different families twenty years of her life; that she had undertaken the arduous task of forming the minds and manners of young ladies; she did not profess to teach them the fluent use of the French tongue, though she spoke it herself, and understood its grammatical rudiments; but she was perfect mistress of the English—reading the best of our authors with the greatest propriety and critical judgment; she was esteemed one of the finest needle-women of the age, wrote a clean, good hand, understood music much better than she could execute, and so nice a judge of time, that her attendance on her young pupils in their practice and lessons was of the most infinite advantage to them; she was perfectly neat in her person, and strictly virtuous in her conduct; her principles were uncorrupted by a single deviation from propriety, and her soul untarnished by one mean or dishonest thought; her understanding and accomplishments qualified her

for the society of the learned, while the simplicity of her manners and the goodness of her heart rendered her the beloved friend and companion of uninformed youth : such was the person to whose care the fortunate orphan was consigned at a very liberal salary.

Mr. Melmoth was, we have observed, a man of letters ; he was, indeed, so fond of holding converse with the dead, that history, ancient and modern, as well as poetry, and the Belles Lettres, engrossed more of his time, when in the country, than was, perhaps, consistent with the warm affection he bore his wife, or the true politeness and attention a fine young woman may be thought to expect ; when he left her alone for hours, preferring his dear books to her society, his heart smote him for it, and he seemed so conscious of a conduct, for which he felt self condemned, (though he wanted the resolution to change it) that he seized with avidity every opportunity of obliging or contributing to her amusement : when, therefore, he saw her busied, and happy in the management of Anna, he gave every encouragement to what, if it may be called a weakness, was a very amiable one. Masters, at a very great expence, were procured to teach her music, dancing, and drawing ; and Mr. Melmoth, farther to oblige his lady, not only consented to paying for the best instructions in those lines the country afforded, but condescended to inspect the literary part of her education himself—a circumstance not more favourable to the instructed than honourable to the instructor.

Mr. Melmoth, though a great scholar, despised pedantry ; his passion for the Greek and Latin was indulged only in his closet, and his admiration of the Muses confined to his secret interviews with them.

Few equalled him in learning or understanding ; in goodness he was exceeded by none ; he was well bred, polite, and humane : the instructions of such a man promised to be, and certainly were, of the greatest advantage to the orphan he patronised : the rapid progress she made in her studies rendered the task his goodness and humanity had imposed soon an agreeable amusement. He pleased himself in observing how strictly she attended to the rules he laid down for the formation of her mind and manners ; inspired her with the pride of virtue and the love of truth : he taught her sentiments founded on the basis of the purest honour ; nor did he forget to encourage every spark of humanity and benevolence in her composition.

With a genius uncommonly lively, and talents to compass every thing, it is little wonder that in four years, the summers given to those invaluable studies, the winters to repeating them, and her other exercises, to her amiable governess, whose endeavours were to render her pupil worthy the continued favour of her benefactors, Anna really deserved the encomiums bestowed upon her : the rooms were adorned with her drawings ; her works framed in the best apartments ; and her taste and execution on the harpsichord unequalled in that part of the world.

Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth, when the duties of Parliament called him to London, left her with regret ; and the pleasure they felt at her personal improvement on their return to the country, was always increased by their observations of her mental ones ; nor, young as she was, when taken under the protection of her present friends, did she forget her obligations to her early ones ; she had been told her claims on the Daltons were not those of blood ; and supposing in their care and affection

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on they had been actuated only by the soft bond of charity and compassion, her little heart expanded with grateful sensations ; she constantly wrote to them from the time she could first join her letters ; and Mr. Melmoth's indulgence supplying her with the means, she was continually sending such presents as the country produced—pork, poultry, and game, they received in abundance from her, which being all carriage paid, and her letters franked, were advantages the Doctor, on his part, never failed acknowledging, taking care to season his letters with spiritual instructions and religious exhortations.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

A Scheme for Reformation.

OUR heroine was now entered on the twelfth year of her age, when an event happened at Melmoth Lodge, which portended, at least, a division of the affection of her benefactress. The lady's pregnancy was announced, to the inexpressible joy of Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth : an heir was the first wish of their hearts, although the length of time which had elapsed since their marriage, without its being gratified, had, in some measure, reconciled them to what appeared the will of heaven ; but their acquiescence was the effect of necessity, not choice. Their joy was, however, not a little clouded by the growing embarrassment of their circumstances.

Mr. Melmoth's total inattention to his affairs, and his blind indulgence to his wife in all the tonish extravagance of the age, which were every winter increasing, had so much involved his estate, that before the birth of his child one half of its inheritance was wholly alienated, and the other deeply mortgaged. The appearance of the little stranger added to the inquietude of its father : he had hitherto read and wrote, while his acres were flying over the town, or sinking into the purses of fraudulent dependents and licentious servants ;
but

but his Eliza brought with her new cares as well as new affections.

Mrs. Melmoth who being brought up in a style of life which obliged her mother, while she set her daughter off to the best advantage in her power, to save it out of unseen necessities, having once attained the projected end, which was, that of marrying well, thought the riches of a man with three thousand pounds a year, was endless ; and as her husband had never stinted her in whatever she chose to spend, it had not been her inquiry, or concern, to know how his circumstances stood ; nor did he soon awake her from the intoxicating reverie into which luxury and dissipation had lulled her : but when, before the summer was over, she gave him notice of a second blessing in the increase of his family, he, with great tenderness, informed her of the state of his finances. Her distress, which was great, joined to her fondness for her child, had at first nearly overpowered her reason. After some time, however, she entered with the greatest alacrity into a reform in their expences ; the superfluous servants were discharged ; all the carriages, but the family coach, were laid down, and the horses sold. Mrs. Melmoth would no more go to London ; and Mr. Melmoth's principles setting him above the hopes of advantage to himself from the seat he held in the senate, he, to the surprise of his friends, resigned it. The town house and furniture were disposed of ; and before the second child made its appearance, Mr. Melmoth, by having happily got rid of so many (to them) incumbrances, had time to be both a family man and an author ; while Mrs. Melmoth commenced a mere country lady, who was very well satisfied now to find she had the use of her limbs.

Happily

Happily for our heroine *she* was not yet considered one of the superfluities it was necessary to discard, but her instructors were. Mrs. Barlow, indeed, was a very worthy woman; her they could not think of parting with, as their Eliza would soon be under her care; but music, dancing, and drawing for Anna were immediately given up. The time usually devoted to those accomplishments, was filled by our heroine very pleasurably to herself in the nursery with the children of her patroness, of whom she was excessive fond; and they, as is ever the case with infants, soon found by whom they were beloved. Thus we see (however the degeneracy of human nature may influence our maturer actions) gratitude is the first sensation observable in the attachments of young minds. Mrs. Barlow, notwithstanding her desire of being always with the children, kept her, at stated times, to the constant repetition of those lessons which had been so expensive to Mr. Melmoth: she was indefatigable in her intreaties to Anna, not by forgetting those valuable branches of female education, to give cause to her patrons to regret the time and money bestowed on her.

This good woman knew (what a dependent in a gentleman's family frequently does not) the reduced circumstances of her employers, and foresaw her young pupil could not long enjoy the sunshine she now experienced. The heart of Mrs. Barlow was the resort of humanity, as well as the seat of virtue: she had heard the orphan state of Anna; and esteem, first founded on her amiable disposition, and rivited by compassion, now endeared to her the child of misfortune much more than with the same attractions she would have done in happier circumstances. To make her a useful member of society, she now conceived that the greatest service she could do to the young creature she entirely

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ly loved, and therefore blended domestic needle work with ornamental. Anna conquered every thing ; she soon put Mrs. Melmoth out of conceit with her milliner. No cap or hat pleased but those of Anna's making ; the family needlework went all through her hands, and she became, to the great pleasure of Mrs. Barlow, and the gratification of her own pride, of real use to her benefactress.

About this time, when Anna was entering her fourteenth year, Colonel ——— ; but what am I about ;—to introduce a hero at the end of a chapter ! he deserves and shall have one to himself.

C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

The Nabob ———.

COLONEL Gorget was a little man, with a fallow complexion, small black eyes, Roman nose, and fine teeth, at this time about fifty years old, an immense favourite (as he himself was so good as to inform his acquaintance) of all the great men of the age, and of all the fine women of the late and present race of beauties. He was the son of a lady of good family, the widow of a near neighbour, and valued friend of the late Mr. Melmoth, who unfortunately, in an excursion to Bath, was prevailed on to give her hand to an Irish adventurer, equally destitute of property, character, or principle. After dissipating what fortune his bride was in possession of, he had the address to persuade her to give up her very considerable jointure; and when that was spent, with a vast deal of tenderness and good humour, he gave her constant exercise for patience and resignation, by involving her, alternately, in those scenes of affluence and distress to which the life of a professed gamester is subject. Those exercises recalled, with bitterness, to her memory the calm and honourable life she lived with her first husband, so preyed on her spirits, and injured her constitution, that she died unlamented, and almost unpitied, in her fortieth year, leaving one son by her second husband. Him, on her death bed, she recommended to the
good

good Mr. Melmoth, whose regard for the relief of his friend outlived his displeasure at her folly and imprudence.

Mr. Gorget, whether from a confidence in this gentleman's goodness, a want of feeling for his son, poverty, or all these reasons united, soon after his lady's death abandoned his child and left the kingdom. This was the kindest thing he could have done for young Gorget, for Mr. Melmoth held the character of the father in such contempt and abhorrence, that it must have been on a very extraordinary occasion indeed, he would meddle in the family concerns of such a man; but the pitiable situation of the boy was no sooner made known to him, than he gave orders for furnishing him with proper necessaries, and put him to a reputable academy in the vicinity of the metropolis.

His genius was of that equivocal nature, that though he could by no means be called a dunce, he never could be made a scholar; indeed, he fenced, danced, and made verses in the *double entendre* style, better than any youth in the school. On a consultation between his patron and the master of the academy, that gentleman's first scheme of bringing him up to the church, where he had a presentation, which he kept open for him, was laid aside, on account of his trifling turn; and an Ensigncy in a marching regiment procured, as more suitable to his talents and disposition. Here, then, at the age of eighteen, we find him beginning the world with two suits of regimentals, a dozen of shirts, and twenty guineas in his pocket.

As the pay of his commission was very inadequate to the expences attendant on the life of a man of mean pride and vicious pleasures, before he attained the age of twenty-two, although, by the interest of his friend, his income was enlarged,
by

by his advancing in rank from Ensign to Captain, he was involved in debt to every tradesman whose credulity rendered him the dupe of his plausible tales, as he constantly passed himself on them for the ward of Mr. Melmoth, and gave himself credit for a large fortune in that gentleman's hands.

With a disposition wherein cruelty and ingratitude were blended, he possessed all the powers necessary to rise in a polite circle. He had an infinity of small talk; servility enough to render him invulnerable to common rebuffs; and patience to endure, with an affected complaisance, the proud man's scorn: he had a sigh for the afflicted, an indignant glow for the oppressed, and his softened voice professed universal charity for those who were griped by the hard hand of poverty and want.

Those were the outlines of a character the most complicated and contemptible of the human species; for though a sense of his narrow circumstances, and small hopes, taught him to practise those lessons of non-resistance and lip-deep humility, for which, indeed, a late noble writer was his sanction, his heart was the receptacle of vices, the reverse of those virtues of which he made an ostentatious parade: he was proud, envious, unforgiving and selfish, insomuch, that in no one voluntary act of his life did he forget to conduct himself so as not to further his own interest; a common injurer of others, he never forgave one offered himself; to those whose rank and fortune were either above, or (if equal) independent of him, he was the very essence of humility, good humour, and complaisance; but to those few whom Providence, in its anger, had placed under his insolent jurisdiction, his arrogance and cruelty were unbounded. The punishment he inflicted on his fellow creatures unhappily

happily under his command, for the slightest offences, held him up to the soldiery as an object of detestation, while he flattered himself, that, under the sanction of strict discipline, he veiled the real lust of power and merciless disposition of his soul.

Could this man be suspected of announcing himself the champion of the softer passions, of valuing himself on his success with the gentle sex, whose nature shrinks from tyranny, and whose eyes involuntarily turn from the perpetrators of unfeeling barbarity! one would imagine it impossible; but his was, as I have said, a complicated character; it was as far as one evil can be opposite to another, a contradictory one.

The experience, a close and constant observation of the motives, as well as actions of mankind, gave him, added to his innate art and cunning, and these aided by a natural smoothness of speech and plausibility of manners, furnished him with powers to impose himself on his own sex, as a man void of design, or guile. What, then, had a woman to arm herself with against his insidious snares; his person, which was rather disgusting than else, was, indeed, a kind of security against his attempts; but as if (which was not the case) he had been himself conscious of that defect, he was seldom known to begin his attack till he had wormed himself into the good opinion of the destined victim, by a semblance of those virtues she loved, found out her weak side, and where she was vulnerable: that point once gained, ye of my own sex who have fallen, and you of the other, who by admitting men of this stamp into your families, have lost, in the honour of your female, the pride and felicity of your lives, you know what follows.

Inconstancy is ever the companion of intrigue; and when I have said it was this man's boast never

ver to have had a connection with a woman who had not her reputation to lose, nor ever had honour or delicacy to conceal the lapse himself had occasioned, while it will exhibit him as an object of envy to those (and many there are) of his own description, it will inspire the good with horror, and the just with contempt.

C H A P. X.

The Nabob continued.

CAPTAIN Gorget had set out and continued in such an expensive stile, that having worn out every expedient of imposing on the generosity of his patron, and finding the credulity of his tradesmen beginning to give way to the calls of necessity, it became prudent, as he entered his twenty-fourth year, for him to vary the scene; he accordingly exchanged with an officer in ill health, who was ordered to India, and who not only gave up superior rank, but presented our hero with a sum of money sufficient to equip him for the voyage, and recommended him to the general officer who commanded the regiment, in terms which his ready wit, artful manners, and specious appearance greatly improved; he insinuated himself with great ease into his commander's favour, whose open heart

heart was by no means a match for this designer ; and his entertaining conversation procured him a general invitation to his table and house.

And here commenced his first public entrance into the annals of modern gallantry—The General grew more pleased with his new officer every day—He made him his aid de camp, and generously offered, on finding him in rather embarrassed circumstances, to lend him money sufficient to enable him to leave England out of debt—In gratitude for this disinterested kindness, his friend's wife became the object of his cautious but warm pursuit.

The General was a bon vivant, he loved his bottle and enjoyed his friend ; intoxication too often succeeded the exhilaration of his spirits, and rendered him unfit for the bed of a delicate, beautiful young wife ; who, innocent as she was handsome, passed over with great good humour this one failing in a man, who had married her (tho' of a good family) without a fortune, and whose delight it was to support her in the most splendid and happy style—No wish of her heart was ungratified—Till the cruel spoiler came, who ruthlessly taking advantage of the confidence reposed in him by the fond husband, and unsuspecting innocent wife, soon contrived to inspire her with those sentiments which banished honour and gratitude : in a word, after convincing her how unworthy of such a treasure the man was who could neglect it, and by exaggerating charms he swore would grace a diadem, he had lessened her obligations to her husband—his next step, was to guide her attention from a man, much older than herself, who undervalued her beauty, to a lover, of her own age, who adored it.

Too easily he persuaded her to gratify a doting passion so superior to the man's whose name she

bore—

bore—one had *already* known decay, the *other*, never, never *could* : it would be a ceaseless fund of bliss and rapture over which time itself would have no power—In an evil hour, this lovely young creature, whose natural and acquired endowments might have ornamented any society, gave up her claim to all but the most abandoned—Too much elated with his success, and too vain to conceal it, he made a subaltern, who hated him, the confidant of his complicated treachery. Soon was the injured husband acquainted with his dishonour, and as soon furnished with proof sufficient to intitle him to a divorce. But, ah ! how inadequate to the pangs of disappointed, ill-requited love, are the most ample retributions of the law !—It could punish the violator of his honour—It could separate him from his guilty wife—but could it take from him the memory of her beauty and her innocence—Could it shed oblivion's easing influence over his mind, and banish from thence the charms he adored—Could it lessen the reproaches of his own heart, for admitting to his domestic circle, a man of the world, a declared pupil of the Chesterfield system ? Ah, no---Nor law, nor revenge, nor even time can subdue the anguish of such reflections. The goodness of her heart, the elegance of her manners, recurring to his imagination, with the aggravation that one was corrupted, the other lost to him, and that for ever, if he carried on a prosecution ; these, added to his unabated love for her person, spoke peace and forgiveness in the stern heart of the injured soldier---Violent were his conflicts ; but love, all-conquering love, overcame resentment.—He sent her word, if on the honour she once held sacred, she would give up every farther thought of her seducer, as they were going to leave the kingdom, where, long before their return the matter would be

be forgot, he would forgive and never mention the past.

Generous as was this offer, the ill-fated woman refused it—Fond of her undoer, and in full confidence of the honour and fidelity the noble Captain had so often called the hosts of heaven to witness, and finding herself in a way that promised another link to an attachment, she fondly hoped would end but with her life—She frankly owned her situation; acknowledged her husband's goodness; but avowed, the kneeling world should not tempt her to give up the best, the most amiable of men, her dear Captain.

Rage and resentment, in proportion to his love and disappointment, now filled the soul of the injured husband—In his first transports he vowed destruction to the villain that had undone him—To extirpate him from the face of the earth would be an act of common justice to mankind; but his friends prevailed on him to adopt that mode most adequate to the punishment and exposure of such a wretch—The law was slower in its operations than revenge could well brook; but it was nevertheless sure: ruin must attend his prosecution of a man who had offended the laws of society, without friends or ability to pay the penalty it inflicted—He, therefore, resigned his lucrative employment, the reward of many years hard service, to pursue with unremitting vengeance the unfortunate Captain.

In the mean time, the lady wrote her adored word of what had passed betwixt her and her husband, and pleased herself with the grateful raptures he would feel, at so noble a proof of her regard, as the voluntary sacrifice she made him; but who can paint her grief and consternation, at receiving an answer full of the keenest reproaches for the ruin her nonsensical heroism must bring on him:

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him: he conjured her, on any terms, to make her peace with the General—The farce, he told her, was ended; for settle it how she would, he could see her no more—His income was not only small but incumbered, and totally insufficient for the maintenance of the child she was so good as to promise him, but which, in his humble opinion, would be much better disposed of to the general; he concluded, by assuring her, he was,

With the most inviolable regard,

Her most obliged,

Most gratefully devoted,

Humble servant,

PATRICK GORGET.

C H A P. XI.

A Digression.

COULD here my humble pen, by painting the soul-rending consequence of this licentious amour, set one innocent heart on its guard against the destructive arts of infamy, the true meaning of the word gallantry, I would esteem my fame immortal. Sacred should be that pen that could call on the daughters of purity to reflect on the sure consequences of a deviation from the calm paths of virtue and honour.

No sooner is your frailty exposed, than passing over the agony of parents, the shame of children, the sorrow of friends, the disgrace of families, and the triumph of enemies, reflect on the immediate consequence to yourselves.

You will find the doors of uncontaminated reputation barred against you; the eye of virtue turns averted from your glance; the cheek of modesty blushes at your reproach, and the bosom of purity is no longer open to your caresses; yet, the mortification you feel at being shunned by the worthy women of your acquaintance, is nothing to that which is inflicted by the supercilious brows and keen reproach of those who owe to their superior cunning, art, or caution, or their want of attractions, more, far more, than to any merit or virtue of their own, that *they* have not preceded *you* in the miserable lot *you* are doomed to bear.

Think,

Think, while men of honour and uprightness treat you with the most petrifying coldness and neglect, the worthless and abandoned will laugh at your pretensions to common respect: they will conclude, no insult *can* be offered to *you*—Their right to treat a woman of no character, as their own impertinent whims direct, they aver to be indisputable—You must fly to hide your guilty head in solitude the most dreary, as self applause will not there accompany you: or what is infinitely worse, conquer shame, bid defiance to remorse, and associate with the most abandoned of both sexes, and think, while *you* bear evils, and are subject to insults innumerable, the tempter that seduced you raises his unblushing front even in the presence of a Sovereign, whose whole life is one lesson of moral rectitude: and such is the blind imprudence of custom, it is no uncommon thing to see a man who is under prosecution for the breach of every law of hospitality, scandalize the select parties of some of the first married pairs in the kingdom—*He* suffers no inconvenience, labours under no disgrace, is subject to no mortification, nor feels the slow and moving finger of pointed scorn; it is rather a recommendation of *him* that he has ruined you.

This digression has no apology but the motive, which is excited by the subject.

The agonies of death were not equal to those endured by the wretched Mrs. Summers, on perusal of Gorget's letter—Anguish and despair seized her sad heart: she had not a friend, him she had injured only excepted, who would receive or console her—An outcast from society, what should she do—Could she take the advice of the callous Captain, and carry pollution to the arms of a man of honour—Could her heart, reek-

ing with the wounds of unmanly cruelty, still beat in tenderness for the author of her shame and misery, *now* receive the forgiving love of the noble-minded Summers? No; her soul disdained such meanness; it yet abhorred deceit—In the course of her deliberations, she had time to reflect on the wretched fallacy, and ruinous import of those arguments by which she was undone—She saw the monster without his cloathing; but how, alas! did that relieve her aching bosom? it rather aggravated than appeased her sorrows; which, strengthened by unavailing repentance, in a manner stupified her senses, and sunk her once-charming spirits into a state of nervous debility, while her fine figure was reduced to a mere skeleton—She neither sought nor would accept a pecuniary assistance, which the injured General would have gladly offered; but lived on the sale of her cloaths and a few trinkets, having sent back the family jewels; waiting, with a broken heart, the moment that would give to the world the offspring of guilt, the pledge of sorrow, having removed herself to very private and humble lodgings in an obscure part of the city.

In the mean time, the prosecution was carried on against the gallant Captain with the utmost severity; the damages laid were ten thousand pounds, but the jury, as is customary, considering the circumstances of the delinquent, lowered it to one thousand, and his body was immediately seized and conveyed to prison for that sum.

Mr. Melmoth felt all the indignation with which his vitiated conduct could fill an honest heart; but the principal and most heinous parts of the seduction being concealed from him, he was at length, after numberless solicitations, prevailed on to interest himself in the liberation of Captain

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Gorget, before the regiment to which he belonged embarked; his mother's father, and first husband, having been members for the county jointly with his patron several sessions—His case, simply as a young man who had suffered his passions to exceed his prudence, was laid before the magistrates at the assize, and a subscription opened by Mr. Melmoth, with a donation of one hundred guineas, which was so liberally followed, as to raise the damages given to the General—*He*, however, thirsted not after money; disappointed of the revenge, in which he hoped to be gratified by the perpetual imprisonment of the culprit, he ordered his attorney to pay the whole sum recovered to a public charity.

The Captain, by those means, freed from his confinement, was enabled to wing his flight to regions less unpropitious to the free indulgence of the passions—*There*, uninfluenced by the example of humanity in others, a stranger to the practice of it himself, unrestrained by the laws of a Christian people, and unawed by the fear of detection, he gave loose to the excesses of his nature, and adding avarice to the black catalogue of his vices, became the terror of the inhabitants of the East—Cruelty and carnage were called bravery and justice; and an unbounded greediness for their riches, bore the respectable name of prudence—His fame as a commander, reached the country he had disgraced, and his coffers filled beyond his hopes—With the accumulation of riches, his desires for them increased; at length it being whispered, that *now*, there being very little wealth more in these hapless regions, in proportion to the rapacity of its various claimants, and that the country being very near depopulated, some inquiry *might* possibly be made into the merits of the

Asiatic plunderers, by those who were excluded from any share in the golden fleece ; he prudently remitted his fortune, and returned himself to England, after twenty-six years residence in India, with precisely the same principles, and the same disposition (though in far different circumstances) in which he had left it.

With a constitution debilitated by the heat of the climate he had so long lived in, as well as the excesses in which he had indulged his favourite vices ; deprived of the powers, he was still cursed with the inclinations to evil ; vanity and folly marked his steps ; nor could his sunk eyes and gray hairs, which spoke a language all but himself believed, find credit, viz. that the days of intrigue were passed and gone—But who will speak the language of truth to a man who knows not the end of his riches ? *Pitiable Gorget* !—There were yet those that told him, he was irresistible ; and, still more pitiable, he believed them—No public place, but his hollow countenance was exhibited—No beauty passed without throwing him into affected transports ; and he ever provoked the risible faculties, by discovering, in some fond sally of vanity or other, he persuaded himself he was making conquests, where, in fact, he was an antidote.

I will not leave this portrait, without informing my reader, the unhappy Mrs. Summers was released from all her cares in the hour of child-birth, leaving her infant son in the hands of strangers ; who, ignorant of the real name or connections, after some little time carried him to the officers of the parish, where he was brought up, and at the usual time bound apprentice to a working mechanic.

CH A P.

C H A P. XII.

The Visit.

WHEN Colonel Gorget arrived in England, he was entirely without any of those troublesome ties of blood which look with expectation on Asiatic accumulations ; but there were claims his pride would not suffer him to pass over, because the memory of old times would be revived by others, in proportion to his own forgetfulness : this, he was too cunning not to know ; and he had, with secret exultation, anticipated the manner in which he proposed returning Mr. Melmoth's favours, whose frequent refusals to answer his extravagant demands, he determined to punish by his own ostentatious generosity : but long before he could return to England, Mr. Melmoth had been called to receive the reward of his benevolent actions, unalloyed by the narrow-souled prejudices, from the Being who delights in charity.—His children, however, were living, and the Colonel condescended to assure them of his friendship and protection, of which he sent them earnest in very valuable presents, the produce of the land of plunder ; but he was in no hurry to proceed any farther in the debt of gratitude, and secretly cursed the obligation he was under, of receiving and answering their letters ; which, as they abounded in professions of esteem and friendship, called for a return of the same nature.

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But though Colonel Gorget was not troubled with family claims, he soon had acquaintances enough ready to court his notice, to flatter his pride, and to make their vast advantage of his vast riches. To the discredit of our nobility, there were among those not wanting some whom profligacy and imprudence had reduced to the mean task of preying on the follies of their inferiors. Colonel Gorget retained his lip-deep charity, but his purse, which opened voluntarily to the claims of indigent quality, as voluntarily closed against the pleas of calamity: it was fortunate for him he was a sober man, and he was too wary to play; to those two circumstances it was that he owed the retaining his dear-bought wealth, since it would very well afford the drafts frequently made on it by way of loan to his friends; and while he continued that convenient mode, he had the honour of having my Lord this, and the Earl of that, stop at his door, of being received at their houses, and admitted into the parties of their female connections.

He purchased a magnificent house, which was adorned with all the trappings of the East, and finished quite in the Nabob stile; and Bath being recommended as salutary to the disorders he had contracted in India, another was bought there, which outdid any thing in that elegant seat of dissipation. His carriages were superb; his servants numerous; his liveries gaudy; and there wanted but one thing to complete his suite. A man of fashion was nothing without a mistress; the poor Colonel wanted only power and passions to be as great a libertine as the greatest; but his hobby was to preserve the appearance of both. Two of his noble friends recommended each a prodigious fine creature; the Colonel, to displease neither, took both, one to do the honours of his town residence, the other to figure at his Bath villa.

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The ladies were both fine women, and quite the fashion; they were distractedly fond of the dear man, whose money they condescended to spend, and the only motive they had to accept his establishment, was the passion they felt for *him*; they had, indeed, qualities not very common to those who love. No jealousy interrupted the tranquillity of his moments, they were in perfect unity with each other; perhaps the Colonel's ill health, which, as he affirmed, prevented his indulging himself in the rapture of their embraces, might make them easy with respect to his personal favours, and as to his pecuniary ones, he was magnificent to each.

The truth was, he thought his reputation, as a man of gallantry, could not be supported without a little libertinism was added to it, and in that case one mistress, or two, were indispensable appendages to his establishment; but as to inclination for either of the fair ladies so honoured, he had none. Sated with the full enjoyment of all that money could purchase, it required uncommon attractions to call forth the latent and almost extinguished sparks of desire in his constitution; yet though no longer interested in its effects, he could not help making flaming love to every woman he was in company with; when no better offered, Abigail sufficed, and then a trifling present terminated the amour he had settled. Both his houses made entertainments, shewed his affluence, and exhibited his riches. He had been the subject of newspapers and private conversation; he had purchased a borough, and bought off the petitioning opponent; he had taken his seat in the senate, and made a speech *there*, which called forth the civility and attention of the Minister; when the House breaking up, and the town beginning to be deserted by his noble friends, the visit he had prom-

misad the Melmoths recurred to his memory. He had flattered those people with being the heirs to his immense fortune ; they were, therefore, continually urging him to honour them with his presence, and as he could not well be off, though he heartily wished them in the Black Sea (a favourite expression with him) he resolved on taking a round to visit them, and those people who had yet lived, and were his friends in the subscription affair—scatter some loose cash among them, and drop their acquaintance.

He took Bath in his way, where having enjoyed the society (which he secretly hated) of his divine sultana for some little time, and found benefit from bathing, he set out for Melmoth's, as chief of that family, having apprized them of his intention in the middle of June.

The house, the lady, her children, and family, were all set out to the best advantage, in respect to a visitor from whom their expectations were so great. Their expressions of joy at the honour he did them were sincere, and their desire to render his visit agreeable, could only be equalled by the professions of regard, friendship, and affection, of their guest, who praised their fare, approved their situation, and appeared, as was his custom, in raptures with the lady.

After dinner, with the fruit, Mrs. Barlow, Eliza Melmoth, and Anna, with the youngest child and her maid, made their appearance.

It is, perhaps, difficult to conceive any thing more bloomingly attractive than our heroine at this period : she was just turned of fourteen, tall of her age, elegantly formed ; her face, besides being regularly beautiful, had in it a peculiar sweetness and animation that was sure to strike the eye ; and in hearts where any of the graces that adorned her's existed, to leave a prejudice in her favour.

vour. She had not yet resigned her white frock ; and her hair, which grew in the most luxuriant profusion, hung down in natural ringlets to her waist.

To eyes accustomed to behold faces where beauty had no trace, or where the *put on* could hardly be distinguished from the charms of nature, no wonder this fine young girl appeared divine. He had been tired out with the attacks of those beauties, whose undaunted eyes and blushless cheeks demanded his adoration ; imagination was palled with their advances, and the heart recoiled from a captivity which had not the *novelty* of *modest* assurance to recommend it. But here his vitiated appetite, fired at the sight of beauty and innocence, in the irresistible garb of modesty, to destroy that serenity of countenance, to rob those eyes of their downcast charms, to tear from her cheeks their blushing honours ; in fine, to possess so beautiful, so innocent a creature, struck him the moment he beheld her, as the summum of human bliss, but whether in a comeatable situation or not, it was impossible yet for him to determine.

Master of every disguise of the human heart, he reined in his admiration, and under pretence of lavishing his caresses on the little Eliza, hid emotions to which he had long been a stranger.

Mrs. Melmoth's maternal feelings were highly gratified by his conduct ; she exulted in the happy presage his fondness for her daughter gave of his future generosity to her. He informed himself of the progress the child had made in her education, and inquired whether she meant to send her to school, if so, he would pay her pension. Mr. Melmoth answered that he had a general dislike to that mode of educating young ladies ; that they had a very good woman who had done great honour,

honour to herself in the improvement of the young lady he now saw, and whose accomplishments, as well as the whole turn of her mind and behaviour, was the best evidence of the utility of the method they had adopted of bringing up their children.

Anna was now called out, her works were exhibited, her drawings admired, and some trifles she had been so fortunate as to hit off in poetry, at which Mr. Melmoth was much pleased, produced. She was commanded to sing and play,—heaven and earth, was it in nature to be less than melted! Her execution was really above her years, or the instructions she had received; and her voice was softness and melody itself. The enamoured Colonel was profuse in his compliments. Mrs. Melmoth, pleased at her exertions, and charmed at the pleasure expressed by her guest, was in the best spirits in the world; she repeated Anna's history with a view of entertaining him, and, perhaps, a little to impress him with an idea of her own humanity. This was, indeed, speaking to his soul; he heard, with a joy (deep as was his faculty for dissimulation) he could with difficulty conceal, the orphan state of his lovely conquests. He retired early under pretence of fatigue, but in reality to ruminate on the means most likely to put him in possession of the charming Anna.

His plan was now altered; it would be impossible for him to compass his wishes in the short space he had allotted for this visit at the lodge. He cursed Mrs. Melmoth's stupidity, nauseated her brats, and execrated, a thousand times, the necessity he should be under of bearing with them; but how to ensnare his young prize was his chief care, in cases where vengeance could be taken. General Summers's affair was always in his mind; it had taught him a lesson of caution he had never forgot;

forgot ; but this girl was nobody, she was destitute of natural friends ; no resentful father, no avenging brother, no injured husband, had he now to fear ; and as to Mr. Melmoth, did he not flatter himself, nay, had not he been flattered with hopes of being his heir ? Would he, then, dare to interfere, if he should discover it after he had her in possession, and before he was resolved to act with such reserve as to elude all fear of detection ! This point settled, he gave a loose to his sanguine hopes ; he would devote himself to this dear innocent ; he would give up the world for her ; he wished, indeed, he had not been so precipitate in his choice of his mistress ; but an annuity would satisfy them. How he should be envied ! true she was young, but that was a fault every day would mend. He saw the folly of expecting happiness in a croud ; Anna should be his home : with those ideas it was impossible for him to sleep.

At breakfast next morning, his friendship for Mr. Melmoth, his regard for his lady, and his fondness for their children, had made so rapid a progress in his affections, he found it impossible to tear himself away from them so soon as he intended ; instead of a couple of days, he would make it a couple of weeks.

This intimation was received with pleasure, and their attention redoubled ; but tiresome was the morning and tedious the dinner, since wholly concealed from his sight was all in which his eyes delighted. But the afternoon returned with rapture ; he again beheld his intended mistress more dazzlingly beautiful, more inchantingly lovely than before. Thus passed day after day till the fortnight had elapsed ; and still growing fonder of his friends, the Colonel could not leave Melmoth lodge ; yet had he not advanced a single step in his
grand

grand design ; at length he resolved to try the disposition of the governess, and seized every opportunity of praising her method with Miss Melmoth, of congratulating the parents on so great an acquisition, and paying her the highest compliments, but not a word of Anna.

C H A P. XIII.

An old-fashioned Wedding.

WITH those resolutions, the Colonel at last found, from the information of his servant, that Anna was, as well as her governess, an early riser, and that one hour before the family were assembled was generally spent by them at the harpsichord ; he took such advantage at this intelligence, that at the next lesson, they were surprised at his entrance (by *accident*) into the room they were in. A deep blush of timid modesty tinged the cheeks of our heroine ; nor were those of Mrs. Barlow free from a glow—they would have retired—but the Colonel, with all the softness and good nature his very pliable features could assume, begged he might not be deprived of so lovely a sight as beauty in bloom, instructing beauty in the bud. (Mrs. Barlow was plain in her person, and on the wrong side of forty :) from the character I have

have before given her, the reader will do her the justice in believing, the all-sufficient Colonel, in his fulsome compliment, went a great way towards out-witting himself, which was certainly the case, notwithstanding it was accompanied with an elegant card purse, containing ten guineas, put with great politeness in her hand;—but observing the surprise in her countenance, indicated nothing in favour of his views; that cold distrust on the reverse, and the thankless civility with which she accepted his purse, pretty plainly spoke how little it obliged her: he added, with a graver tone of voice, “I mean it, Madam, as an acknowledgment of my gratitude for the care you take of my Eliza.”

A servant at this moment entered to speak to Mrs. Barlow: *then*, (his whole heart in his eyes) in a low voice, he entreated Anna to favour him with one lesson;—free, equally from guile and suspicion, she was preparing to obey him, when Mrs. Barlow told her Mrs. Melmoth was up—The Colonel begged for five minutes—the obstinate governess would not grant one. It was her custom to attend Mrs. Melmoth as soon as she arose. He was sure that lady would pardon Miss for not accompanying her, if she mentioned it as his request:—“Sir,” returned Mrs. Barlow, with a look and voice which implied resolution on one hand, and suspicion on the other, “if you make the *request* to Mrs. Melmoth yourself, and she complies, I *must* acquiesce; but at present you must excuse her.” The whole of this lady’s conduct and behaviour convinced him he must change his attack, and be more on his guard: it was plain the old lady was clearer sighted than he wished her, and proof (which was to him a miracle) against gold; but, for her, the complying little angel would have staid with him: a curse,

a curse, which this thought sent from his heart before it reached his lips, was changed to a smile ; and with a polite bow he led Mrs. Barlow to the door, wishing her a good morning.

Mrs. Barlow had seen, in the different families where she had served, a good deal of what is called life : she was marked very much with the small-pox, which cruel disorder had greatly altered a beautiful set of features ; it had, indeed, left her nothing but her eyes and teeth, which were both very fine : her manners were by most people thought reserved : from those circumstances she had escaped much temptation to evil herself ; but she therefore had the more leisure to look into the actions of others ; and the uninteresting sameness of her own life, rendered the vicissitudes of people with whom she was connected, the more observable.

The Colonel's character was no less an object of alarm than the charms of her pupil, whom she loved with an affection truly maternal ; she had perceived the corrected transports, the eager looks, the niggard approbation of the former, and trembled for the fate of the latter, over whom she so strictly watched, and whose steps she so closely followed, that another fortnight passed without forwarding the Colonel's honourable scheme : he found he was suspected, and fervently did he wish he had this Argus for one hour in the hallowed land of indulgence, or that he could venture at the same means of quieting her, which, in India, would have excited no inquiry but the *law*. Rude, inconvenient *English laws* were the dread and hatred of his soul : his patience was nearly exhausted, when an event happened which gave new life to his wishes—this was the marriage of Mrs. Barlow, who had been addressed, when in her nineteenth year she waited on a lady at Oxford, by a
Welch

Welch parson. Her lover's passion had not only survived the loss of her beauty, but had been cherished with unremitting constancy twenty-three years, waiting with hope and patience till it was in her power to save, and his to obtain something like a decent subsistence.

Mr. Mansel, with this end in view, had served several Welch curacies, with his eye on a living Sir William Edwin (a baronet, who, on particular occasions, did him the honour of calling him cousin) promised him. The moment the incumbent died, he posted to London, where his patron then was, to remind him of his promise: Sir William was as good as his word; and the happy parson, having obtained the living, took Somersetshire in his way down, in order to carry his long-affianced and beloved bride home with him.

Mrs. Melmoth heard, with a visible concern, the necessity she was under of parting with so valuable a woman; Mr. Melmoth protested her fellow was not to be procured at any rate; but their good friend, the Colonel, found, in some degree, means to reconcile the lady to that event, by observing, she might be a decent kind of woman enough; he believed she was a little precise, or so; but that did not signify: she might be a very proper body to superintend the bringing up of Anna Dalton; but really Mrs. Melmoth must pardon him, if *he* made distinctions. Eliza Melmoth, if she behaved well, would move in a higher sphere of life: he, for his part, who (again they must forgive him) was used to the conversation and company of the first people, knew there were many things, which a young woman of fashion ought to learn, *that* woman was totally ignorant of—French in particular. Did ever any body hear of an English governess being engaged where a French one could be procured.

Here

Here was a speech directly to the heart of the fond mother : joy and happiness was in the sound : —Eliza Melmoth would be heiress to Colonel Gorget, and a match for a duke. From that moment all the useful in the child's education was laid aside : the riches she was to inherit swallowed up her mother's reluctance at parting with the amiable, the sensible, the modest Mrs. Barlow : it riveted her confidence in the Colonel ; and inquiries were directly set on foot for a French governess.

Mrs. Barlow having, therefore, now a handsome opportunity of accepting the offer of Mr. Mansel, and complying with his ardent request of going with him to Wales, as her services could not only be dispensed with, but was in fact no longer wanted, a day was fixed for their marriage at the parish church, when Mr. Melmoth was so good as to stand father to the bride, and gave an elegant dinner on the occasion ; in the mean time all her leisure was spent in repeating the instructions her heart dictated to Anna, whose parting with her governess was the first real trouble she had yet known ; she loved, and was beloved by Mrs. Barlow with the affection most likely to stand the test of time, or any change of circumstance, as it was founded on the mutual approbation and esteem of each other's principles. The maternal love and tenderness which had accompanied all the valuable lessons of the worthy governess, were repaid by the lovely pupil with the most dutiful and affectionate regard : no task was difficult, or entered on with reluctance, convinced as she was, that her own good was the ultimate object in view.

Since the increase in the family of her benefactors, Mrs. Barlow, foreseeing the sun of Anna's favour was setting, had been long fortifying her

her mind against possible, if not probable, events; she had been arming her with patience, and conjuring her to persevere in innocence and integrity now that she was on the eve of leaving her, and leaving her too in a situation which, though it appeared dangerous to her, she was not justified in mentioning, since her own surmises were her only authority: she might be wrong—she might injure the Colonel—but her love for Anna rendered her anxious: it was not, indeed, till the instant of separation she knew how necessary to her happiness this dear girl was; gladly would she have taken her wholly from Mrs. Melmoth; but the bare mention of such a thing she knew would be taken ill, and she had too high a sense of gratitude to offer an affront, where she acknowledged herself much obliged; nothing was therefore in her power but to enforce by admonitions (where tears were blended with instructions) those lessons of virtue and propriety which had been the subject of their eight years studies—she begged that their correspondence might be regular and unreserved; told her with an earnestness, in which truth and love were equally visible, she should always find a home with her, and obliged her to promise, if any unforeseen event should occasion her, either from necessity or choice, to quit the Lodge, she would, instead of returning to the Daltons, come by way of Bristol to her, as that gentleman's family was large, and she would be there receiving obligations, when, in favouring Mr. Mansel and herself with her company, she would, by adding so considerably to their happiness, confer it on them. The poor weeping Anna felt as if she was going to be annihilated; she promised to observe, with the most sacred regard, the minutest thing her dear friend enjoined her, and to treasure in
her

her memory the invaluable instructions she had received from her.

Their parting was accompanied with floods of tears, and their affectionate adieus infected the whole house. With her eyes did Anna follow the chaise ; and when it was no longer in sight, she fell senseless into the arms of one of the maids, who, with all the servants, had followed to the gate, with their good wishes and prayers, a woman, whose inoffensive temper had, for the long time she lived at the Lodge, preserved her from enemies, while the justice, candour, and humanity of her disposition had made her many friends.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

The Contest.

MRS. Melmoth's inquiries after a French governess on which occasion she had wrote to London, were answered in two days, before the departure of Mrs. Barlow, by the application of a person who was accidentally within twelve miles of the Lodge.

A lady of high rank and quality was on a visit at a quondam friend's in Somersetshire: she was there attended with a French gentlewoman, who had been long enough about her ladyship's person to be in possession of some few anecdotes (perfectly innocent no doubt) which gave her, as she presumed, a title to a greater degree of familiarity than sat quite easy on her lady, who, however, did not find it convenient to reprehend or discharge her, but wanted not inclination to do both. It is probable Mademoiselle, as she was called, (who was not deficient in the species of low cunning, some people chuse to dignify with the name of wit) might perceive that she was more feared than valued, and therefore took this opportunity of providing for herself in a country gentleman's family, or that she might fear her lady, who was above setting any great value on character, would grow weary of the trammels her insolence now made her wear.

Whatever

Whatever were her motives, she instantly applied for a recommendation from Lady Waldron to Mrs. Melmoth, assigning ill health as her only reason for her wish to part with so good and so amiable a lady. London air nor London hours agreed with her ; the country she hoped would be of service to her ; but wherever she was, it was impossible for her to forego her respect and veneration for her dear lady, who, on her side, declared nothing on earth should prevail on her to part with so valuable a dependent, but her regard for her constitution and wish to forward her interest—Mademoiselle was therefore dispatched in Lord Bury's chariot to Melmoth Lodge, with the following card :

“ Lady Waldron's compliments wait on Mrs. Melmoth, would certainly have had the honour of paying her respects to her at the Lodge, had she not been confined with a nervous head-ach.

“ Lady Waldron hearing Mrs. M. is in want of a French governess for the Miss Melmoths, takes the liberty of recommending Mademoiselle Frajan as the most proper person in the world for such a trust. Lady Waldron will be answerable in every respect for her character and abilities.”

Colonel Gorget and her two friends were in the saloon taking their tea when this important message arrived.

“ Heavens !” cried the Colonel, “ the divine Lady Waldron in the neighbourhood, and I not at her feet ! A few years back she would have been highly piqued at such neglect : upon my soul I was fond of that woman ; but let us see her card—ha, the same pretty penwoman, and her style too—

“ Is,

"Is, no doubt, very good," interrupted Mr. Melmoth; "but upon my word, my dear," turning to Mrs. Melmoth, "I cannot think Lady Waldron's recommendation an eligible one for the sort of person you want."

"Mr. Melmoth, you astonish me," answered the Colonel in warmth; "are you really so ignorant of what is due to people of distinction, as to doubt (notwithstanding the little gallantries of her Ladyship's life) any person would, or, indeed, could object to her recommendation?—Mrs. Melmoth, see the lady by all means." Mr. Melmoth would have offered a negative, but his circumstances were so involved, and his expectations so great from his generous friend, contrary to his own judgment, which at all times was good, he remained a silent, unapproving spectator; while Mademoiselle was admitted, examined, hired, and returned with the following card:

"Colonel Gorget's very best compliments to Lady Waldron, begs leave to return a thousand thanks for the honour her Ladyship conferred on his friend, Mrs. Melmoth, who is happy to have any person under her roof that has attended on the charming Lady Waldron."

"The Colonel will have the honour of paying his devoirs to Lady W. and Lord Bury, as soon as convenient to them."

It will, I presume, be asked, why Mrs. Melmoth herself did not answer Lady Waldron's card. I have told my readers that Colonel Gorget was, according to his own account, acquainted with the first men, as well as the finest women, in the kingdom; but I did not pledge myself for the veracity of that assertion. The truth is, excepting those hungry and profligate peers who condescended to borrow his money, which I before observed, he would freely lend to a peer, and the family, to whose

whose father he owed all that he was, he was as little known as respected ; and as to Lady Waldron, he had actually never seen her but in public : nevertheless, quality acquaintance was his greatest ambition ; and not being troubled with the modest diffidence that keeps merit at a distance, or when it is suffered to approach, prevents the display of its claims to patronage, he seized, with undaunted assurance, on this occasion, to introduce himself ; he did not, however, take the sense of his friends on the contents of the card to the lady ; he felt the superiority of Mr. Melmoth's judgment and understanding too forcibly, to suffer him to inspect into so flimsy an artifice. As to matter of custom and politeness, were they not poor, and was he not rich, and were they not in too much distress to risk offending a man in whose power it was to be their friend ? Certainly Mr. Melmoth felt himself hurt ; and it was not till he had heard a great deal more from his wife, of bearing, and forbearing, he could quite resume his good humour ; but that was a mere bagatelle.

The next day brought the French governess ; the apartments were now to undergo an entire alteration ; the little library, where all the ideas of Anna were formed, was no more ; Mademoiselle must have a room to herself. At this our heroine did not repine, as she then slept with Eliza, but soon had she sufficient reason to regret her lost friend ; her respected companion. Every successive hour in her time had its employments or amusements that contributed either to health or improvement ; the hours appropriated to useful or ornamental needle work, were now loitered away from trifle to trifle, or actually sunk in direct idleness ; and those most delightfully filled by reading some of the best English authors, in which happy periods they were frequently honoured with
the

the company of Mr. Melmoth, who had the goodness to guide her judgment, and direct her taste, now lost in an illiterate commencement of the French language, which Anna could not comprehend, nor would attend to. In fine, she despised the instructress, and could not profit by her lessons; ignorant, haughty, and ill bred; commanding with an air of insolent pride, those, who not being used to such manners, scorned to obey. Mademoiselle began her career at Melmoth Lodge with the dislike of all its natural inhabitants; the Colonel, indeed, was charmed with her; as to the children, it was enough to say Mademoiselle was coming, to frighten them into any thing.

This respectable person for whose character a lady of fashion was answerable, was in her thirtieth year; had been handsome; was dirty in her person; immoral in her discourse; ignorant of the refinements of her own language; and too volatile to learn, with propriety, that of the country she found it convenient to reside in: her speech was a mixed jargon of broken English and vulgar French; she wore a vast deal of rouge, took snuff; loved intrigue; and hated work; such was the person engaged to supply the place of Mrs. Barlow, at Melmoth Lodge, under the auspices of Colonel Gorget.

C H A P. XV.

Family Anecdotes.

THE gallant Colonel was now in his element; he was waiting a mandate from Lady Waldron; he was ogling and sighing at the Frenchwoman, and he felt his desires increase every moment for the innocent victim he had marked for his own.

He had proposed two days stay at the Lodge; as many months were now elapsed, and he spoke not of departing.

Mrs. Ashby, and Mrs. Mandeville, two sisters of Mr. Melmoth, were in impatient expectation of the time he would confer the same honour on them; and anxiously jealous of a partiality so marked, more than half repented of giving up Mrs. Melmoth's acquaintance, as they had, by that means, shut themselves out of the way of paying their court for the loaves and fishes.

They were continually sending him invitations, tiresome enough, as he could not prevail on himself to leave the Lodge, till he had visited Lady Waldron, made a conquest of Mademoiselle, and secured Anna; but it at last struck him, that the distance being so small, he might occasionally visit those ladies, without remitting his attention to either of the points he wished to keep in view; indeed, he now recollected it as an odd circumstance, which had before escaped his observation, that neither of Mr. Mel-

Melmoth's sisters had been to pay their personal respects to him there: this was a matter as unintelligible to his hosts as himself, the family connection had been declined on the part of those ladies; with little ceremony, and less good-nature; and whenever they met by accident, it was with that stiff contempt on one side, and careless indifference on the other, that an eclaiircissement was the last thing likely to take place.

Mr. Melmoth, in justice to himself and family, could not help relating, with some acrimony, the unprovoked caprice of his relations, on being questioned on that head by his friend.

The Colonel expressed both grief and surprise, to hear that his charming, his amiable friend, Mrs. Melmoth, had been so impolitely used.

He supposed, her husband's having so nobly preferred happiness to riches, in his choice of her, to be the cause of her being treated with such disrespect.

The lady blushed at this compliment, which rather mortified than flattered her; but answered coolly, if that was the case, she presumed the dislike of Mr. Melmoth's relations would have been shewn at the time of their marriage; on the contrary they had lived with great harmony four years.

Well, it *was* astonishing; the Colonel could *not* account for it; but, however, he would take a ride to Mrs. Ashby's—He would know the cause; and did assure them, if the sisters did not well acquit themselves, or make proper advances towards a reunion in the family, they should be equal strangers to his friendship and favour.

Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth could have dispensed with this interference; they felt no regret at being deprived of the society of relations, between whom, and themselves there existed neither affection nor esteem; but the apparent candour and good nature of

the motive, called for thanks and acknowledgments; yet though they did not refuse, neither did they court the good offices of their officious friend, on an occasion about which they were perfectly indifferent—However, the following morning Colonel Gorget's servant was sent with the joyful news, that his master would condescend to dine with Mrs. Ashby next day, and requested Mrs. Mandeville would be of the party.

The ladies were in raptures at the sight of their dear and honoured friend; they had been broken hearted at his being so near such a length of time, without allowing them to pay their duty; and Caroline Ashby was not a little mortified, that her young cousins had so much better fortune than herself, in the opportunity his residence at the Lodge gave them of attracting the honour of his notice.

The Colonel, on his part, was all affection and politeness; he had suffered very much, in depriving himself so long of the happiness he now enjoyed; he was charmed with the ladies, and delighted with Miss Caroline; and notwithstanding what I have said of the duplicity of his character, he was in his professions of friendship and regard, quite as sincere as the ladies to whom he addressed them were in theirs.

After dinner Miss Ashby was called to her instrument—She was a tall coarse girl of sixteen, who was so partially approved by the mother, and whose every action so charmed, that when once the delightful theme of her perfections were started, it engrossed her whole attention.

Come, Caroline, let the Colonel hear my favourite song.

Play your new lesson.

Now my dear, the rondeau.

With a conceited air, and unblushing countenance, Caroline obeyed—Destitute of taste, air, voice,

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voice, or judgment, and free from the constraint of timid modesty, the young lady entertained their guest—no room indeed was left for his request; the fond ill-judging mother, still continuing her plaudits, and still calling forth the fancied attractions of her darling daughter, not knowing, that instead of gratifying, she was disgusting the person it was so much her wish to please.

The contrast between the manners as well as person of the prosperous Caroline Ashby, and the poor orphan'd Anna, was indeed too striking, not to redouble the value of the one, in his estimation, as he felt tired and disgusted with the other—It was in vain he sought an opportunity of entering on the subject of the coolness that subsisted in the family; Miss Ashby had still some charming thing to amuse him with, till after shifting his seat several times, and betraying every token of restlessness, he was obliged to break in on what he vowed was the harmony of the spheres, to beg an hour's serious conversation; but Miss was still desired to keep her seat, as Mrs. Ashby, was sure, Colonel Gorget would wish to hear another song before he left them.

He then, with great apparent concern, inquired the reason, so manifest a disunion prevailed in so respectable a family?

A general simper overspread the countenances of the ladies.

They affected a reluctance to enter on the subject, which he was too great an adept not to perceive was affected, and that with expectation of being more closely urged.

After many evasions, and pretended backwardness, to say any thing that could lessen their friend's good opinion of any part of the family, Mrs. Ashby took upon her to be spokeswoman.

She appealed to himself, whether, in the first instance, it must not be a great mortification to them,

to see their only brother, a young man in possession of such a noble estate, and the last male of their family, free from incumbrances of any kind, throw himself away on a woman of neither birth nor fortune, the daughter of people of doubtful character, as she supposed he knew.

The Colonel bowed his assent.

However, when the thing was past recall, we thought it best to be on decent terms with them, but when, in the face of the whole country, she shamelessly brought her natural daughter here, dressing and educating her in a far superior stile to what our children were dressed and educated, squandering our dear father's fortune on her illegitimate offspring; it was too much; the honour of our family was concerned, as well as our own private feelings, in avoiding all intercourse with them.

What is this you say, Madam? answered the Colonel in the utmost astonishment? Let me understand you—her natural daughter!

Yes, returned Mrs. Ashby, that Anna, that Pet is her own child; she was brought from London by an old servant of my father's, who received her from the people that nursed her, and they told Dame Plunket, Mrs. Melmoth had at last prevailed on her husband to take the brat—All the old servants (some of them born in the house) were discharged, for presuming to deliver their opinions on so scandalous an affair: it is now no secret, every body in this country knows is, nor can she be ignorant that her infamy is discovered; but it is no wonder she wishes to conceal it from you, Sir.

This was news indeed to Colonel Gorget; not that he believed a syllable of the affair as represented by Mrs. Ashby. Mrs. Melmoth, at his first coming to the Lodge, related, in such an ingenuous, artless manner, her accidentally meeting with the orphan she protected, together with the name
and

and place of abode of the person from whom she took her, whose sacred function was, as well as Mr. Melmoth's authority, a confirmation, that placed beyond a possibility of doubt the truth of the story; besides Mr. Melmoth, although, as Dame Plunket said, a mere sap in wordly wisdom, had too much honour, as well as understanding, to support his wife in such an atrocious imposition; it was so easy to trace it to conviction, if false, and no less to confirm it, if true, that he hesitated not to decide, in his own mind, on the innocence of Mrs. Melmoth: he had, indeed, so thorough a knowledge of the world, and what it would do to carry a point, that he made no doubt but this was a calumny, originating at first in the spirit of curiosity, and confirmed by that of ill nature; but the matter now was, what use could be made of this piece of intelligence—could it not be tortured so as to turn to the advancement of his grand design? Mrs. Melmoth's favour was of consequence to him just now; should he, therefore, make a merit with her of vindicating her injured fame, and clearing her character from the unjust aspersions it had sustained; or would it not be better to reserve this act of justice for some future occasion.

Could he not by and by tell it in a manner that should both alarm and distress her; and was it not probable, in that case, he might seize some favourable moment to induce her to discard the innocent cause of her disquiet.

At all events, he could at any time disclose it as an act of kindness, or, if more convenient, as cause of quarrel, and an excuse to break off the connection, when it was no longer necessary to be so partial to her, or so dotingly fond of her children.

At present then he resolved to sail with the stream.

After

After some moments profound silence, during which he turned in his mind the preceding arguments, attentively watched by the ladies, he raised his eyes to heaven, and, deeply sighing, cast them down again instantaneously without articulating a syllable.

Another pause raised the expectation of the company; and so prepared were they to coincide with the wisdom of his opinion, that had he, as they presupposed he would have done, stood forth the champion of Mrs. Melmoth's honour, rather than risque a difference in opinion with him, they would have given up the matter, notwithstanding their rooted prejudices, and their warm regard to the credit and honour of their family.

But such condescensions were not likely to be demanded; the Colonel solemnly addressed them:—

“Let us,” said he, “my ever dear friends, where justice will permit it, leave room for candour; let us believe you may be misinformed.”

Encouraged beyond their hopes—No; they assured him that was impossible; they were but too certain.

“Well, then,” continued the mild, benevolent man, “let us, not know it; or if we *must* know it, let us hoping the poor woman may have seen her error, and, in compassion to the children she has by your brother, give the world an example of charity and forgiveness in our conduct.”

If the reader has been used to converse with Colonel Gorgets, and he will find many of them on the theatre of the great world, he will know that there are two ways of enforcing an argument; and that the same words, literally repeated, may serve for either.

Thus

Thus to be looked upon as the peace-maker of the family, and to be esteemed the friend of Mrs. Melmoth, was what the Colonel chose to express in his words; but the manner of his uttering them made it pretty plain neither was in his meaning.

With the present inhabitants of the Lodge he was perfectly free from all apprehensions of a discovery of the latent cause of his remaining there. Mrs. Melmoth was a good-natured, open-hearted, thoughtless woman, whose bosom harboured not suspicion of any kind; all she had in view was, paying court to the Nabob for the sake of her children.

The Squire was, every moment he could steal off to his study, up to the ears in heroic poems, and when present, more than half in the third heavens: as for the French governess, she was almost a match for the Colonel himself; elated with his amorous advances, she had, in her own ideas, laid a regular plan of defence and capitulation, and already rolled her vis-a-vis down St. James's Street, not giving way to Lady Waldron herself.

Anna, the treasure for whom all his plans were laid, innocent and careless, thoughtless and unsuspecting, was now wholly employed in finishing a muff for Mrs. Melmoth, romping with the children, or playing on the harpsichord, and placed her supreme delight in receiving a summons from Mr. Melmoth to his library, or writing to Mrs. Mansel, which she never failed doing, or omitted informing her of every occurrence that happened: to this easy, unsuspecting circle it was not the interest of Colonel Gorget to make any addition.

Mrs. Ashby, a widow, and a coquet; Mrs. Mandeville, a starched prude; and Caroline Ashby, a pert, forward, inquisitive miss, were not at

all people he chose to give an opportunity of observing on his actions.

It was therefore, at present, not convenient to him to bring about a reconciliation in the family, though he thought proper to preserve the appearance of endeavouring to effect it.

When he parted with the ladies at Ashby Grove, he told them it was with infinite regret ; and though he could not but wish to meet them at the Lodge, yet he must own it was a delicate point, on which he could not determine, as it appeared, in the light the affair now stood, equally commendable, whether they continued their reserve in respect to their family, or whether they dropped it in regard to their brother ; but he would give them his farther sentiments when he had the honour of waiting on Mrs. Mandeville, which should be in the ensuing week.

At his return to the Lodge, Colonel Gorget lamented the implacable temper of the ladies he had been with, made comparisons, in an indirect manner, between the gentle and sweet temper of his amiable friend, and that of the violence and self sufficiency of those he had visited ; and in consequence of his unfavourable observations on those ladies, he would no more think of dividing his time, but while he staid in that part of the country make his home at the Lodge.

I need not say Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth were very happy at this preference in the Colonel, or that they expressed themselves not more honoured than obliged, because, though their circumstances were so much deranged, it was the folly of the age, not the vices of it, which had found place in their dispositions ; they really felt his partiality as the highest obligation, and acknowledged it with as much gratitude.

C H A P. XVI.

The Rapture.

COLONEL Gorget, now perfectly at ease in his outworks, seriously began his attacks on our young heroine. It was, I have informed my reader, Mrs. Barlow's custom, from the time the music master was discharged, to keep Anna to a regular practice of lessons one hour every morning. The interruption which alarmed the governess, induced her to change the place of practice ; and from the time the Colonel intruded on them, they had made use of an old organ in an octagon temple, where formerly little concerts had been held. Anna, in obedience to Mrs. Mansel's injunctions, as well as to gratify her own taste for music, continued her morning visits to the temple : of this circumstance an old valet, who, being as artful as his master, was the only servant who could stay any time in his service, informed the Colonel ; and he, the very first day after this intimation, under pretence of strolling round the gardens, surprised her in the middle of a lesson, which so entirely engrossed her attention, that he had sufficient leisure to examine, and admire the various charms of a young creature, who was the emblem of youth, innocence, and beauty ; but his emotions did not suffer him to enjoy long, in silence, so exquisite a feast : at first the surprise
both

both alarmed and confused her ; but he, throwing all the softness and polite respect into his manner, he so well knew how to make sit easy on his features, begged a thousand pardons for the intrusion, and with great earnestness intreated he might not interrupt her—said he would instantly leave the place, if she required it, but should be forever obliged by one song.

This request, in her idea, amounted to a command ; she knew how exceedingly Mrs. Melmoth was interested in pleasing this gentleman, and as unapprehensive of danger as unconscious of guilt, with no other embarrassment than at first proceeded from her natural diffidence, she sung and played.

The morning was one of the hottest in August ; not a breath of air interrupted the melody of her voice, and the accompaniments were echoed from an adjacent grove ; she astonished and charmed the enraptured Colonel in her warblings of “ Fair Aurora,” from Artaxerxes ;—another and another song was asked, and granted ; when suddenly recollecting her dear companion in this morning amusement, she made a quick transition from Sestini’s lively “ *Non du bi ta,*” to Linley’s beautiful elegy of “ I sing of the days that are gone.”

He could hold no longer, no longer restrain the transports of a passion he secretly vowed no power should prevent him from gratifying ;—catching her in his arms, he swore she was more than mortal—she was divine—and ravishing from her hitherto-unpolluted lips kisses, not less disgusting from his figure than frightful from his vehemence, for a moment deprived her of all power of resistance, soon, however, thoroughly terrified at his indecent violence, her screams rent the grove ; but lost now to every idea except that of gratifying his

his hideous passion, he recollected not how far he was removed from that country where rape and murders are tolerated acts ; deaf to her cries, unmoved by her youth and terror, he was proceeding to outrage, when the sudden appearance of Mademoiselle took from him all active powers.

The trembling Anna escaped out of the temple, and, with inconceivable agility, ran into the nursery, where she fainted away.

The interview between Colonel Gorget and Frajan requires an abler pen than mine to do it justice ; that lady was awakened much earlier than common by her own agreeable ideas. The gallant Colonel had taken an opportunity of attributing to her charms his stay at the Lodge ; the passion he felt for her, he vowed, would consume him ; life was no life ; it was a lingering living death, without the adorable Frajan ; he added as many more brilliant things as could be crammed into a two-minutes stop *en passant*, as he crossed the hall ; and so delighted was she with his homage to charms, which, to say the truth, were pretty well worn, it was late before her delightful reveries gave way to repose, and early when they resumed their empire over her imagination, to indulge in her fond presage of future happiness. She strolled into the garden, and was, at the instant of her turning towards the temple, deliberating with herself whether she might not by affecting reserve, draw the old fool into marriage ; many a one had been so caught by those who could not boast half her attractions ; indeed, on recollection, a trifling objection occurred, namely, her being married already ; but that was of small import, Monsieur Frajan was a gentleman who had the honour of belonging to the Grande Monarque's guards ; he was too polite to be hard of access ; and too poor to be troublesome ; he had the misfortune of not
being

being able to support Madame Frajan in a stile equal to her elevated notions ; and he had the happiness of being too great a philosopher, to let *that* disturb his peace ; but then, supposing that matter adjusted, she should be obliged always to live with the ugly wretch ; now, as a mistress, she was entitled to separate purse, separate pleasures ; and as to interest, it is seldom, indeed, in that situation they are united ; these considerations being all reduced to facts, what must her consternation be at seeing the man who was dying for her, who she set down as her fixed slave, on the point of committing violence on a beautiful inmate in the same house, a mere chit, a girl she held in contempt ; rage tied her tongue, as confusion did his.

But rage in the French woman, though strengthened by so severe a disappointment, had not power to repress the happy turn of her nation ; her risible faculties were irresistibly and involuntarily excited by the object before her.

The Colonel's figure was truly comic ; imagine you see a little mean-looking person, his eyes not yet recovered from their vicious stare, endeavouring to blink away the shame of detection ; his fine laced ruffles hanging in tatters over his wrists, and the contrast between the powder and his olive complexion rendered still more striking, by its being brushed off his head on different parts of his very yellow face ; that head on which time had made woeful depredations, it being very near bald, his friseur had, with great art and care, scraped up a few bristles of venerable hue, to dress in the front of his wig, which was made so exactly to fit, that it was not, till she saw it on the floor, Mademoiselle could believe he carried so unfashionable a thing about him ; his locks, totally deranged,

ed, hung about his ample forehead; and his *tout ensemble* being too much for French gravity.

She exclaimed, "Ah, *mon Dieu*, what with " that figure would you have done with the child!" and bursting into a fit of laughter, picked up his wig, and begged to have the honour of re-adjusting his head.

The Colonel's enraged looks presently reminded Mademoiselle of the lapse she had made; it was, she now recollected, her part to be dying with grief at the discovery; but another discovery had likewise been made; her exclamation, the loud laugh, the contemptuous shrug, spoke a language the Colonel with all his vanity could not help understanding; it told him the conquest he had meditated was as little likely to injure her peace, as his own; she was, therefore, as to her own person or sentiments, not an object in the least interesting to him, but those involuntary marks of contempt for his person would certainly have operated to her immediate disadvantage, had he not been restrained with a presence of mind that never so entirely forsook him as in the present instance, by a recollection how much it was in her power to serve or injure him in his grand design, now inflamed beyond his power of subduing.

Bitterly did he curse the precipitate folly that would doubtlessly alarm the girl, and render the assistance of this auxiliary of importance; his intention was to have treated Anna with a delicate indulgence, to court her respect, to insinuate himself into her confidence, to excite her gratitude; but by no means to alarm the trembling virtue he knew was implanted in her mind.

The sad gradations from uncontaminated purity to audacious vice, was a lesson he had taught many an innocent heart; well was the subtle veteran in iniquity acquainted with each winding maze,

maze, each artful clue to attain that horrid end ; and deep were his regrets that he had suffered passion to counteract his usual precaution.

The girl might now be telling Mrs. Melmoth all that had happened ; she might, at this moment, by her artless eloquence, be exciting the resentment of Mr. Melmoth, for the insult offered his friendship and hospitality ; or in case that gentleman might not chuse to break with so valuable a friend, he might send her away ; she might escape ; he might see her no more ; that idea was not to be borne ; no time must be lost to take the enemy he detested to his bosom, while it would answer any purpose of his own, was what he had practised his whole life ; but it was not often he had been so situated with a female on whom he endeavoured to make an impression, but who, after giving every token of a growing attachment, had, in one unguarded moment, convinced him he was her scorn ; hard as it was to forgive Frajan's *mon Dieu*, it was here absolutely necessary at least to counterfeit it.

Coming, therefore, directly to the point, he seized the hand of the governess, which action she mistaking for an overture towards making an amorous peace, was withdrawing with the prettiest assumed, soft, melancholy air imaginable ; but from the languishing down-cast, her bold eyes were turned into a stare of wonder at the manner of his addressing her.

No vows, no tender protestations, no deprecations of her anger, or promises of future fidelity ; but a sacrifice more acceptable, and as well understood, a heavy purse, found its way into her unreluctant hand : what other arguments, if any were necessary, Colonel Gorget made use of to appease the resentment of Frajan, I know not ; certain it is they parted very good friends.

The

The situation in which I left my heroine, spread an alarm among the female servants ; Mrs. Melmoth was acquainted with her indisposition ; and very anxious, on her recovery, to know what could have occasioned such a violent agitation of spirits.

Anna's innate delicacy, the modesty of her nature, and the innocence of her heart, tied her tongue ; the recollection of the Colonel's insults filled her with confusion ; she was ashamed to repeat even to Mrs. Melmoth what she had been exposed to, and afraid to say from whom ; a flood of tears was the only answer she could make ; and her benefactress, finding her anxiety increase by talking, with the kindest expressions of affection, left her, and descended to the breakfast room.

The Colonel entered while Mrs. Melmoth was relating to her husband Anna's sudden illness ; how he felt is one thing, what he said and how he looked another ; with well affected pity in his countenance he eagerly listened whether any part of the temple scene had transpired ; and finding, to his great joy, it had not, was then at liberty to be as sorry for the poor girl as he thought convenient.

Anna gladly made her illness an excuse for not going into the dining parlour with the children ; it was indeed, more than an excuse, as she was still very much indisposed ; but though she did not make Mrs. Melmoth the confidant of her ill treatment, she was less reserved with Mrs. Mansel, to whom she wrote an account of the whole affair, beseeching her advice how to conduct herself with regard to her benefactress, as she could not summon courage to tell her of the abandoned conduct of a man who was so highly respected in the family ; she was not quite at ease with herself at the first concealment she had ever made from that lady.

lady. Curiosity had once tempted Frajan, in breach of all the laws of politeness, to open a letter from Mrs. Mansel to our heroine, who taught wisdom by experience, now, to guard against the like inconveniency, requested Mrs. Mansel to direct her answer, under cover, to Jenny Stedman, the nursery maid.

C H A P. XVII.

The Fracas.

ANNA kept as much as was in her power to the nursery, and the governess appeared equally desirous with herself to avoid a *tête à tête*; nor did she once name the Colonel, or drop a single hint of the temple scene.

Some few days after, when our heroine had recovered her spirits, she repeated, as in the fulness of her heart she often did, how happily her time passed with dear Mrs. Mansel: Frajan, who heartily despised the poor creature, as she called the late governess, took occasion to throw out some very sarcastic and contemptuous reflections on her management of the young ladies.

Anna answered warmly, and perhaps pertly, the Miss Melmoths would have cause to regret the change as long as they lived; for that the eight
years

years Mrs. Mansel resided at the Lodge, she was in person and mind, one invariable example of the lessons she taught. This speech, with, I am afraid rather a marked emphasis in some particular parts of her eulogium, provoked Mademoiselle, who, as I have informed my reader, being married, shall be no longer dignified with that title—Madame Frajan then retorted as spitefully as with the aid of malice and ill will she could, and as it was a cause for which our heroine would have died, she was not spared in her turn ; and the governess being very little more indebted to patience than to prudence, was so enraged, that Anna was obliged to her heels, which preserved her from the fury of the irritated Frajan—Disappointed in her attempts to overtake her, she flew to Mrs. Melmoth ; complained loudly of Anna's insolence ; said she had hitherto had the honour of serving ladies of the first distinction, who, thank heaven, had never taken the liberties with her, Anna had done ; she would not on any terms put up with it ; and she must beg Mrs. Melmoth would discharge one of them.

The lady found herself much embarrassed by this requisition of the governess, delivered in a style she by no means approved ; she loved her Pet ; this was the first complaint that had been made of her, and she doubted much of the violence imputed to a child who was remarkable for her easy temper.

Dismissing the complaint, therefore, for the present, Anna was ordered to attend Mrs. Melmoth ; she was extremely surprized, when instead of the mild gentle girl, who had never offended a single creature that she knew of, she beheld an absolute little virago, sobbing with passions, and glowing with anger, her face and neck in a flame.

Her

Her benefactress began, by severely reprehending her for being insolent to Frajan, but this agitated her so much the more, as to render her from passion and tears, unintelligible, so that she was dismissed in great anger.

Cut to the soul at having, for the first time, offended Mrs. Melmoth, Anna sent in an hour after, and begged repeatedly to be admitted, but she had too seriously offended to be indulged.

Mr. Melmoth, unfortunately for Anna, was gone to the county assize, which generally kept him three days from the Lodge, and the Colonel having at last received the welcome mandate from Lord Bury's, was there.

Lady Waldron found herself so well entertained in the society of this amiable personage, she prevailed on him to sit down to picquet with her after dinner, when she contrived to ease him of an hundred pieces; which, notwithstanding it infringed one of his established rules, he paid, with great politeness and good humour; though I cannot but own, some trifling manœuvres in the lady's play might have discomposed any other set of features but those of the Colonel; but he had dined with Lord Bury and Lady Waldron, and it was not in nature to be out of temper in such company, and the lady had promised to preside at a *fête* he intended to give on his return to London: those were circumstances so highly acceptable to his wishes, it could not but have a very happy effect on his spirits, which was still visible when he attended Mrs. Melmoth to breakfast next morning—He heard from his fair hostess, in her open communicative way, the fracas between Anna and Frajan, and at the same instant, her surprise and displeasure at the passion, or stubborn spirit, she did not know which to call it, of her *Protégée*.

Mrs.

Mrs. Melmoth, artless, and undefining in her own nature, and so pliaibly disposed towards the Colonel, that all he said bore the semblance of wisdom and justice.—Mr. Melmoth, the honour and probity of whose disposition enforced respect, even from him, absent, and Madam Fragan ready for any scheme of iniquity—*Now* was the propitious moment ; *now* the time, if ever, to secure to himself the possession of the charming object of all his wishes.

He smiled.

It was not a smile of approbation.

It was not a smile of pleasure.

Neither could it be said to be a smile of contempt.

But the Colonel could smile, and turn, and smile again.

He had the art of making his features speak, what, with great honour his tongue might deny.

The smile called up the colour of Mrs. Melmoth in her cheeks.

It said ;

What, Madam, is it only now you are acquainted with this girl's ill disposition ? It said more than that ; it called for an apology from Mrs. Melmoth, for what her heart had always told her was the most meritorious act of her life, and obliged her to plead the destitute situation of Anna, as well as her having been at that time childless, as an *excuse* for what had been her *boast* ?

A second smile deprived her of the power of advancing another syllable in vindication of her own charity.

An obstinate silence on the part of her guest, till the breakfast things were removed threw her into an agitation she could not account for ; but the good Colonel was at no such loss ; he knew its source,

source, as well as the means of improving it to his own advantage.

A turn or two across the room in deep contemplation, heightened the solemnity of his visage and address, when he, looking full at her, demanded, on her sacred honour, how long she had known this girl?

Though astonished both at the question and the manner of its being put, it was not possible she could deviate from the account he had already heard, as that account was strictly true.

Her answer threw him into another fit of silence, and then, without farther ceremony, he acquainted her with the reasons assigned by the ladies of the family for not visiting her; adding, that it was a fact implicitly believed all over the country, that Anna was her *own* natural daughter; that the girl was so insufferably haughty and overbearing, it confirmed the general report; and it was on that principle, and the fear of giving her offence, that she was the last who was informed of what the whole country rung of—Every attempt of mine to describe the surprise and distress of Mrs. Melmoth at this mortifying stroke, would be totally inadequate to her feelings; I will therefore beg my readers to make the case their own. It was with great pain that she supported herself till her maid brought salts and water: her laces were cut, and a friendly shower of tears a little relieving her, the first use she made of the returning power of speech, was to direct Mr. Melmoth to be immediately sent for.

This was not what our man of gallantry wanted: he ever declined altercations with men, particularly those of understanding; he therefore took the liberty of privately countermanding Mrs. Melmoth's orders, and begged she would retire and compose

compose herself, and when she was recovered, he would request to be admitted to her apartment.

The moment the illness of her benefactress reached the ears of Anna, she ran to her in agony, and continued about her, regardless of the presence of Colonel Gorget, who, in her concern for her friend, she entirely overlooked: she followed Mrs. Melmoth to her chamber, and lamented so tenderly and so respectfully any thing should ail her, that she could not find in her heart to retain any displeasure against the poor girl, notwithstanding such a provoking interpretation of the motives for her partiality as that she was just informed of. The lively and grateful sensations of our heroine were not unnoticed by the Colonel, who, dreading the influence of sensibility over the mind of Mrs. Melmoth, did not chuse to trust them long together; but as soon as any kind of regard to decency would permit him, sent his request to be admitted; the lady then kissing Anna, bid her retire, and the Colonel entered.

He began in very moving terms to inveigh against the ill nature and scandal of the world: that part of it who could wrest so laudable an act into so infamous a meaning, deserved annihilation.

The injured lady said she would not insult his judgment so much as to enter into a vindication of her innocence; she was sure it would appear with such unquestionable proofs as would cover her calumniators with shame.

He suffered her to proceed in a mixture of grief and passion, till tears again relieved her full heart; then opening what he had farther to say, with the most flaming professions of friendship and regard, vowing he had not himself a doubt but she was as innocent as he knew her to be amiable; begged to observe to her, scandal was much easier raised than refuted; it was likewise much easier refuted than

than silenced ; while, therefore, the girl continued under her protection, what had been believed would be remembered.

“ And what, Sir,” said Mrs. Melmoth, eagerly interrupting him, “ must become of the poor thing ?”

“ What, Madam,” answered he gravely, “ will become of her, if you still keep her ; you know best ; but I advise you to consider whether your circumstances are such as will provide for a girl you have so improperly educated, or if they are, could you knowingly fix such an indelible stain on your husband’s family as suffering a weak attachment to influence you to persevere in confirming the shameful reports already circulated ?—Come, come, Mrs. Melmoth, you must forgive me, if, for the sake of your children, your own sake, and that of the respectable family (I speak not in contempt of your own) into which you are married, I urge you to the only act which can clear your character in the opinion of the world ; for my own part, I frankly confess, I look on myself, though not of their blood, as allied to the honour of the Melmoths. You must positively part with this girl.”—“ Ah !” said Mrs. Melmoth, weeping, “ she is the best creature in the world : what, what will become of her, poor, poor girl ? my heart bleeds for her.”—“ Oh, she would do very well :—the parson, from whom she was taken, would provide more properly for her, by getting her a service, than she could by keeping her in a character it was very unlikely she would ever be able to support.”

In short, partly by hints that he should be eternally disobliged by her not adopting his opinion, and partly by his absolute assurance, on his honour, that the girl was wholly unworthy the kindness

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shewn her, of which her treatment of the amiable Frajan, a person who certainly had been very much esteemed by people of the first distinction, was one of the many instances he knew, but did not chuse to repeat : he at length prevailed on the gentlest of female hearts to be guilty of an act of deliberate cruelty, by discarding, without any real provocation, from her favour and protection, an innocent, unoffending, young creature, she had adopted as her own child, without first informing herself whether any other person would receive her.

Eager to carry his deep-laid plan into execution, through all delay or opposition—"A propos, "Madam," said he, "the London stage passes "to-morrow morning—oblige me by exerting "your resolution—accept this sacrifice to your "humanity," presenting a Bank note of twenty pounds—"see her no more, as you value your "own peace or my friendship. And here," continued the generous creature, "I believe I have "not yet paid my entrance into the good graces "of my Eliza; do me the honour of presenting "her with what this will purchase, in my name," putting into Mrs. Melmoth's hand another note of one hundred pounds.

Gratitude, prudence, and that all-subduing argument, *self* interest, was too powerful to be resisted—it overcame all farther scruples :—Frajan was summoned—she was directed to send Anna away by the London stage ; and, in fine, the Pet was discarded, the orphan no longer protected.

C H A P. XVIII.

A Rencontre.

WITH what a light heart and gladdened countenance did Frajan fly to execute her commission. "It cannot be," said the petrified Anna; "it is not in the nature of my dear benefactress to be so cruel. What! turn me out of her house, without suffering the poor girl she has so often and often pressed to her heart, to kiss her dear hand, to pray for, and to bless her for her goodness. You are surely diverting yourself, Madam, by sporting with my misfortunes." The unfeeling governess assured her over and over of the truth of her message: she advised her as a friend to make the best of the matter—pack up her trash, and, since go she must, set off with a grace, that the servants might not make their observations.

"Ah!" answered Anna, "how much at ease must that mind be, who, in such a moment, could be biassed by such trivial ideas. Alas! I think not of any thing but never seeing my dear Mrs. Melmoth more—of being for ever separated from my sweet Eliza—of no more being permitted to hear from dear Mr. Melmoth, the instruction of wisdom, or to thank him for those he has already taught me. Do, dear Mademoiselle, beg for me. Alas! I have

" long

“ long expected to go—but not so very sudden—
“ not in so disgraceful a manner.”

“ Not I,” answered the Frenchwoman: “ I
“ assure you, you think to whine Mrs. Melmoth
“ out of her resolution ; but the Colonel will take
“ care of that.”

“ It is then to his endeavours and yours,” returned Anna, with spirits, “ I owe the loss
“ of my benefactress’s favour : I will not, therefore, trouble you with any message to her ; but
“ as to your associate, you may tell him, ’tis poor
“ spite, in such an old man, to persecute a young
“ girl, whose offences towards him are her strongest claim to the favour of heaven : God reward
“ you both. I have no selfish regrets at leaving
“ this place ; none but what arises from my
“ grateful love to its owners—Dear spot,” continued she, looking mournfully around her, “ once
“ the hallowed retreat of peace, content, and
“ unanimity, the bright dwelling of virtue, the
“ seat of wisdom ; but now”—darting a look of contempt into the guilty soul of Frajan—“ you,
“ Madam, and Colonel Gorget are here—why
“ need I describe the hateful reverse ?”

It is not to be supposed Frajan, whose least virtue was patience, bore this keen reproach without retorting, which she did with all the spite and abuse in her power ; and that, it must be confessed, is saying a great deal.

Anna, full of her own concerns, heeded her not: she set about packing her trash, as Frajan had not improperly called them ; for she had grown so very fast, and money was so scarce an article at the Lodge, that she had, for the last three or four years, been altering and cutting up one old thing to piece out another, without having the deficiency supplied by any thing new ; so that, though she was blessed with a person and manner

that stamped gentlewoman on her appearance, let her dress be what it would, her clothes were but a sorry recommendation to respect ; and bad as they were, less useful than valuable ; such as she had, however, she put up in a small trunk of Mrs. Mansel's, and a smaller bundle ; and then once more, made an effort to see Mrs. Melmoth, by prevailing on the footman to deliver an humble, but ardent request, to be indulged with one moment's audience after tea ; but the Colonel, who stirred not from the lady's side the whole day, frustrated her wishes, by setting his negative on the message as soon as delivered.

She was likewise forbid seeing the children ; Mademoiselle would not suffer them to be disturbed with her deceitful whimpering.

This, though meant as an act of cruelty and mortification, was, in its effect, the kindest thing that could have happened ; for Anna so doted on Eliza, the parting with her would have half broken her heart, without answering any purpose but rendering her unfit for her long journey.

Such a sudden turn could not but surprise the servants ; but as every creature in the house (those only most concerned excepted) had heard, and, indeed, generally believed, the report so long circulated respecting the consanguinity of Anna to Mrs. Melmoth, so when, by the Colonel's command, the old valet communicated to them the injury that had been done their mistress, and assigned *that* as a reason for the discarding our heroine, in order to clear the lady's character, which had been falsely aspersed, it became a matter of course : they, however, were all filled with pity and regret at parting with her ; every servant in the house followed her with cordial wishes for her health and prosperity. Jenny, the nursery maid, who had been her's when she first came to the

Lodge,

Lodge, wept over her, and promised faithfully to send Mrs. Mansel's letter the instant it arrived. No choice was left her, otherwise her inclinations would have led her, as she promised, to Wales; but Mrs. Melmoth's commands were, that she should go to London; and as Anna had never yet disobeyed any order of that lady, she did not chuse to do it now.

At four o'clock in the morning the stage stopped, by order, at the Lodge.

Mrs. Melmoth, not then under the constraint imposed by her artful guest, got out of bed to take, in a peep through the curtain, a parting view of her Pet; she saw her slow, reluctant steps, followed by all the maids, and some of the men, wiping the fast-falling tears from her face, which, on her reaching the stage, was turned full to her apartment, and then to the nursery; and after a minute's pause in silent grief, with an act at once graceful and affecting, she extended her open hand to each, first consecrating it with a kiss, then making an easy courtesy in return to the benedictions of the servants, with a bursting heart she ascended the vehicle.

Mrs. Melmoth's emotions were so strong at the last sight of a child she had brought up, and her affection renewing, filled her with such regret at her departure, she rung for her maid in her first agitations to have Anna detained. Kitty, who with her fellow servants was at the gate, not directly hearing the bell, the stage was far out of sight before she attended her mistress, who she found in a fit of hysterics, which rendered her unable to breakfast below.

Nor was she the only person whose rest was disturbed by a desire to see the last of our heroine.

Madame Frajan was too full of joy at this event, not to delight her eyes with so acceptable a sight ; but she had another reason, she had thought proper to convert the twenty pound note given her for Anna into ten guineas, which she thought quite enough for such a brat, prudently sinking the remainder into her own purse, as she must certainly be a better judge how to use that sum than such an ignorant thing as Anna ; but, however, she might reconcile the discretion of the act to her own mind, she was not quite so easy in her apprehensions of detection ; nor could she securely enjoy the success of her fraud, till our heroine was out of sight, when she returned to her repose, and slept, according to custom, till ten o'clock.

Colonel Gorget too—but let me not make a mistake, his *rest* was not broken by his curiosity, for he actually was too much overjoyed to take any : he told, in wakeful anxiety, the tedious hours as they passed, till the welcome one arrived, which by removing Anna from Melmoth Lodge, carried her nearer the habitation he was so kind as to design for her, not without emotion, though of a different nature did he with every graceful attitude of his unconscious charmer ; his heart throbbed with ungoverned ecstasy ; and when the coach drove off, he pronounced himself the happiest of men.

The tears which plentifully flowed from the eyes of our young traveller, at first hindered her observing her companions ; they consisted of an aged farmer-looking man, a pretty young woman, his daughter, with whom he was returning from a visit they had been making to some near relations who lived thirty miles beyond Melmoth Lodge to Epsom, where they resided, and the identical dame Plunket ; the latter was grown a few years older, it is true ; she was a good deal fatter, and
somewhat

somewhat richer than when last she travelled in company with our heroine; but her malignant, busy, censorious disposition, still remained; and as her ill will to Squire Melmoth's family was now authorized by their being reduced in their fortune, they were hardly out of sight of the house, when she began to open with such coarse and illiberal abuse of them, and such unintelligible, though disgusting inferences, on so fine a lady's being returned to her original poverty, which according to her accounts was bad indeed, that Anna heard her with astonishment, not at first knowing it was to her she was speaking.

When, however, she did understand the vulgar jargon was addressed to herself, and called to mind the woman whose disagreeable behaviour had made a lasting impression on her memory, it had a very different effect from what the notable dame expected; for instead of mortifying, as she kindly intended, it exhilarated her spirits; her pride (of which she had no inconsiderable share) was hurt, and being roused by insults she could not have provoked, no longer suffered the despondency of her countenance to encourage the attacks of her ill-conditioned fellow traveller.

The uncommon beauty of her person, with the sweetness of her manners, prejudiced the old man and his daughter very much in her favour, which she improved by all the little attentions in her power, while she treated the malicious shop-keeper with every mark of indifference and contempt.

Enraged at such airs, Mrs. Plunket sneeringly congratulated her on Mrs. Melmoth's acquisition of a friend who durst tell her her own. Every body, she said, knew Colonel Gorget's visit to Ashby Grove would rout *her* out of the lodge, and fit it should; Miss Caroline Ashby was a gentleman, and it was very hard she should give up

to the Lord knows who.—Oh, if the old Squire could but look down and see the doings which were carrying on at Melmoth Lodge, he would not rest in his grave! Poor dear creature, he little thought *his* estate would be spent to support madams and bastards.

All that Anna could make out of this fine harangue was, that Colonel Gorget was her enemy; and that Mrs. Plunket was a friend to no one but herself; but as she most heartily hated the former, and found herself much inclined to despise the latter, it gave her little concern.

They arrived, without any accident, at the second night's stage, when, to her great mortification, she understood she was the next day to lose her friendly companions, and be left wholly to the society of Mrs. Plunket; her insuperable dislike to that notable dame, rendered her extremely uneasy: the young woman observed it, and good-naturedly pressed her to alight at Kew bridge with them, where their one-horse chaise would meet them to cross the country, from thence to Epsom, from whence carriages went every day to town.

Anna endeavoured, in vain, to reason herself out of her prejudices; the more she thought of it, the more she felt her heart sicken at the idea of proceeding on her journey to London with the disagreeable shopkeeper, and at length recollecting Mr. Dalton was not apprized of her coming, accepted the offer made her by the good country folks. A man was procured to carry her luggage, and she accompanied her honest companions over Kew bridge, and got to Epsom to dinner.

The farmer was a widower, in good circumstances; his daughter managed his house; they were industrious, inoffensive people; easy in their circumstances, and mild in their tempers; they
grew

grew more pleased with their guest the longer they knew her, and were importunate in their intreaties, as she informed them her friends were unacquainted with her journey, to stay with them a few days before she proceeded to London.

The open-hearted friendship and guileless sincerity of those honest people, was too consonant with her own disposition, not to be very pleasing to her; she accepted their invitation, and wrote to Mr. Dalton to inform him of her leaving the lodge, and where she now was, but referred him to their meeting, which would be in a few days, for particulars.

This was one of those incidents in human life, on which often hangs, from secret springs, unseen by mortal eye, the good or evil of our days; it was to our heroine a particular intervention of that providence, we hope, and believe, makes innocence its care; an intervention that could be neither foreseen nor pre-concerted, and which preserved her honour, if not her life.

Perhaps the reader may suspect something more than the honour of the Melmoth family was Colonel Gorget's inducements so strenuously to urge the removal of Anna; and may suppose he might promise himself some advantages from the distress Mrs. Melmoth's desertion would expose her to; he did more, he took measures which he flattered himself would put it in his own power to make good that loss, by being her protector himself; of one thing he was certain, no character of his, no reputation or honour he possessed, could suffer by that or any other step; he had wrote some days back to prepare one of those horrid wretches, who make a traffic of female honour, to entrap and guard the unsuspecting girl when she should arrive in London, and the instant he could be sure of her positive dismissal from

the lodge, he sent off his trusty servant express, with orders for his agent to wait the arrival of the stage, in a hackney coach, before it reached Hyde-park Corner; she was then to say, Mr. Dalton not being at home, and Mrs. Dalton indisposed, she was come from them in consequence of a letter received from Mrs. Melmoth, to conduct her to her friends.

This scheme would certainly have taken effect, as Anna was not only a stranger to the world, but to all kinds of fraud and double dealing, had it not been for the accident before related.

When the stage coach passed, it was accordingly stopped, and Anna enquired for; happily Mrs. Plunket was too much enraged at the insolence of the saucy beggar, to answer any interrogatories; she knew nothing of or about her, and in a huff drawing up the blind, refused to say another word, leaving the enquirers to learn of the coachman what he knew, which was little enough; all he could say was, that he set three passengers down at Brentford, but who, or what they were, he could not tell, as he had drove the coach but from the last change of horses before they left him.

The valet being within call, although he kept out of sight, was now consulted; he was sure no person whatever set off with Anna from Melmoth Lodge; he saw her go himself, but as he well knew his master's heart was set on the accomplishment of his design, they agreed to go on to Brentford, examining, without success, every carriage that passed; they could gain no kind of information, the woman, therefore, returned to town, and Walters went on with his ill news to his master, who was waiting, in anxious expectations to learn the success of his scheme.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

A Curtain Lecture.

WHEN Anna left Melmoth Lodge, Colonel Gorget, joyless and insipid, as now appeared all there, affected to be in the best humour and highest spirits in the world, Mrs. Melmoth's were as proportionably low—Indisposed, and dissatisfied with herself, it required all his efforts to keep her up; he was attentive to every look and word, nothing could exceed the warmth of the friendship and esteem he professed for her; he romped with Eliza, and her infant sister came in for a share in his caresses: to direct the too intense reflections of Mrs. Melmoth, was no less his study than his interest.

He could form no excuse for leaving the Lodge just now; he did not, indeed, chuse to stir, till the longed-for news came from his agent in town; but he took occasion to alter his mind, from a circumstance he did not foresee.

When Mr. Melmoth returned from his little journey, he was most graciously received by his good friend the Colonel; and this particular civility was the more agreeable to him at that time, as he met a person at the assize, who having a large mortgage on his estate, had dropped some ugly hints about foreclosure, which much mortified and hurt him; and he just resolved to open his mind to his zealous friend, not doubting, but he

he would rejoice in an opportunity to give him proofs of that good will he so liberally professed, by advancing the money, and taking the mortgage into his own hands.

The fond father called for his children the instant of his arrival, and pulling out of his pocket a beautiful drawing, said, Mrs. Laſmayor, a lady, who lived at the county town, begged Anna would copy it for her.

“ Alas !” answered Mrs. Melmoth, bursting into tears, “ she is not here, she is gone, I have “ sent her away.”

Mr. Melmoth, in the utmost astonishment, demanded her meaning—Colonel Gorget, then, for the lady was unable, related the whole affair, but Mr. Melmoth’s generous heart, so far from according with the Colonel’s opinion, recoiled from the prejudices he saw that good man wished to inspire : he reproached his wife severely, both for her want of feeling and judgment, in parting with the lovely orphan they had so long patronised, and brought up with such care, which love was so amply repaid by her amiable disposition and fine qualities. The story repeated so pompously by Colonel Gorget, had long reached him ; he was told of it within a few months of its invention ; but too generous to avenge the cause of the guilty on the innocent, he took every other possible method to convince those, whose good opinion he valued, of its falsehood and absurdity ; but it had never struck him, as it had done his *worthy* friend, discarding the unoffending orphan, could operate as a justification of his wife’s character—Perfectly satisfied with it himself, he chose not to disturb her peace by troubling her with the surmises of others ; and as to the quarrel with the French governess, he avowed the most contemptible opinion of that lady, her abilities and principles : in
short,

short, Mrs. Melmoth had never seen her husband so much hurt or displeased with her before ; she pleaded the Colonel's advice and assistance, in parting with Anna, and he consequently attempted to convince them both, he acted on principle ; but those arguments which the lady had found unanswerable, appeared equally fallacious and ridiculous to her husband ; he swore never to forgive the inhumanity of the act, and keenly upbraided his guest for urging Mrs. Melmoth to a step that would, in the judgment of every humane being, be a reproach to her as long as she lived.

This was a kind of freedom Colonel Gorget could by no means relish ; but as he knew how to turn every thing to his own advantage, he immediately recollected a breach with Mr. Melmoth at this particular period was the most convenient thing that could happen, he vindicated his conduct with a mixture of acrimony and haughtiness he was well aware would exasperate instead of appeasing ; his wish was now to make matters worse : his plan succeeded—Mr. Melmoth, in the involuntary resentment of his generous heart, and in his compassionate feelings for the poor orphan, forgot his mortgage, his poverty, and his hopes ; he had even the imprudence to revert back to some circumstances in the life of the great man, which circumstances as he chose to consign to oblivion, he could never forgive Mr. Melmoth for remembering—His horses were directly ordered, and though it was past ten o'clock, he set off after profusely paying the servants for the trouble he had given *their* master, to Mrs. Ashby's, leaving his hosts, for the first time in their lives, angry and dissatisfied with each other.

The morning, with his wife's tears and remonstrances, brought cooler thoughts to Mr. Melmoth ; for though he still continued his partial regrets

regrets for the fate of Anna, he began to be sensible of his impolitic conduct towards a man, who had it so amply in his power, and he had every reason to conclude in his inclination, to serve him—Mrs. Melmoth, on her part, lamented, with some little asperity, the fracas, that had at once deprived them of the advantages and hopes her sanguine ideas had brought to a certainty ; and could not help inveighing bitterly against that warmth in her husband, excited by the interest of a person who was nothing to him, to the prejudice and perhaps ruin of his own children—He felt the sad conclusion of her argument, though he was self-acquitted as to that part of his conduct which had brought on him the displeasure of the Colonel : nevertheless, in compliance with the request of his wife, he rode over to Mrs. Ashby's, to make what submission his circumstances, *not* his judgment, dictated.—But his wish to conciliate matters was intirely frustrated ; the Machiavel he followed, was congratulating himself on his escape from the Lodge—He was but too happy at being furnished, by the simple honesty of Mr. Melmoth, with an excuse that would justify him, for breaking with people, who building their airy castles on so slight a fabric as his promises, might have been so impertinent as to charge him with ingratitude, as well as injustice, when they found how far wide promise and performance was with so great a man.

He refused even to see his late esteemed friend ; and Mrs. Ashby, now justified in her spleen and gratified in her malice towards her sister-in-law, failed not to pay her own court, at the expence of her relations ; scandal took the hint ; Mrs. Melmoth had lost Colonel Gorget's favour, owing to keeping her bastard at the Lodge ; the mortgagee pressed for his money ; creditors grew clamorous ;
the

the now distressed Mr. Melmoth, urged by necessity, wrote repeatedly to the callous Colonel, and at last his letters were returned unopened.

It will not be wondered, in so unpleasant a situation, all thoughts of Anna were sunk in their own difficulties; there remained for poor Mr. Melmoth but one alternative, either to give up his all, or leave the kingdom, which they very precipitately did, first discharging, with every mark of contempt and disgust, the French governess.

While these matters were transacting at the lodge, Colonel Gorget was impatiently waiting the return of his servant; but the disappointment of his hopes, and the pangs it gave him, began the punishment due to his hypocrisy, at the instant he promised himself the full enjoyment of his wish; he had been so very careful to attend to the least minutiae, and made so sure of succeeding in his plan, that he could scarce credit his servant's protestations of zeal and fidelity with which both himself and associate had executed their commission.

After a thousand questions and as many curses, he pretended urgent business, took a very tender leave of Mrs. Ashby, and Miss Caroline, for whom he vowed eternal friendship, and set out for London, stopping at every inn where the stage called, to trace the lost object of his desires—He found Walter's report confirmed at Brentford, where he lost her himself; but not content thus to give up happiness, just as he flattered himself it would be within his grasp—he first set a watch about Dalton's house, from which finding no Anna was there, he went personally to make inquiries, and relying on the truth of Mrs. Melmoth's account of the manner in which Dalton had first met her, he introduced himself, by pretending some knowledge of her parentage—Nothing prospered with
the

the poor Colonel, that tended to the destruction of our heroine, the method he fixed on to gain intelligence, was precisely the one least calculated to answer the purpose.

Mr. Dalton dreaded no event in the world so much as a discovery of Anna's family, since that must consequently lead to a settlement he was every day more averse to making.

He was much mortified by the receipt of Anna's letter from Epsom; he had hoped all his trouble and expence on her account was ended; but that mortification was transient, as it was succeeded by inquiries, he believed came from a relation, who would have more easily traced her to the Lodge, than he could do either to where she now was, or where he might with great ease remove her.

He therefore absolutely and resolutely denied knowing any thing of or about such a person; assuming such an air of truth, that the Colonel began to doubt his own judgment, and to conclude, the girl was actually, as was reported, the daughter of Mrs. Melmoth; which, after continuing for some time his watch in vain, in Dalton's neighbourhood, he at last believed, and that she had been conveyed by the order of her mother out of the road of inquiry.

CHAP.

C H A P. XX.

Another Journey.

AT this time two of Dalton's children lay ill in the small pox, an accident particularly favourable to his views of concealing our heroine, as they knew not of her having had that distemper.

When her letter (in which she told him of the necessity she was under again to trouble him for an asylum, till some mode could be fixed on to enable her to support herself) came to him, and that followed by inquiries after her that filled him with dismay—He wrote directly to inform her of the situation of his family, and desiring her to remain where she was for some little time; generously adding (to make sure of her not coming to town) that he would pay for her board, and promising to see her very soon.

Three days after, came to his house, inclosed by the faithful Jenny, Mrs. Mansel's answer to Anna's letter.

Guilty minds are soon alarmed; every thing that concerned his charge, was at this period particularly interesting to Dalton; he was at no time restrained by a sense of honour, and now curiosity had self-preservation to aid it—the seals were cautiously broke—and the contents filled him with such joy, that having as cautiously re-sealed the packet,

packet, he went to Epsom for the purpose of delivering it.

His surprise was inexpressible, at being there shewn into a neat country parlour, where a tall, elegant young creature, whose looks and manners still more than her beauty commanded respect, soon recollected him, and threw herself at his feet, with the most lively expressions of gratitude and affection—He felt an involuntary kind of awe, accompanied with a pang of something resembling conscience, though I will not venture to say it was that irresistible monitor; because, if it was, from that time to the period in which I now write, I do not believe it has disturbed him with a second visit, which choaked his utterance: however, he soon got the better of it, be it what it would, and congratulated Anna on her improvements, at the same time observing, how very lucky it was she had been prevented going to London, as her beauty might have been spoiled by the small pox.

“I am shoure,” said the good old farmer, “that would be a sad pity; God bless her, I would keep her for ever first.” Dalton, to his great satisfaction, quickly found no pay was expected or would be taken, and therefore very earnestly offered it; but the honest creatures meant the friendship they expressed, and so far from accepting his money, begged Anna would remain with them till all danger was over; but the letter Mr. Dalton brought with him, put every other idea out of her head; she was on the wing to obey its contents, which was as follows:

“MY DEAREST CHILD,

“Your last letter fills me with such apprehensions for your safety, that I shall not rest till you are with me.

“I ad-

" I advise you, my dear Anna, to make Mrs. Melmoth the confidant of the wicked Colonel's conduct; she may, perhaps, have her reasons to avoid a breach with him, but I am sure her regard to virtue and delicacy, as well as her undoubted affection for you, will induce her to grant the request I make her this post of suffering you to pay me a visit: but my Anna, this is on a supposition, no other insult may have rendered it expedient for you to leave the Lodge, or that by the contrivance of that bad man and woman, you may not, which I expect, be sent from thence—If either of those should be the case, God, I trust, will preserve you, and enable you to come to me in safety; my sweet child, how dearly have I missed you, and with what pleasure have I begun to decorate an apartment that shall be your own.

" Mr. Mansel, the tenderest of husbands, and most worthy of men, bought a piano forte yesterday at Caermarthen for you; it has a good tone, and in repair; though the lady who had it was so long in ill health before she died, it has not lately been used: the woodbines and jasmines in front of your little room rather darken it, as the casements in this country are small, but they shall be taught to grow in forms most pleasing to the child of my heart.

" How often have you contributed to my happiness! come to me, my own Anna; it is only your society that is wanting to complete the felicity of your affectionate,

And truly

Maternal friend,

MARIA MANSEL."

" LLANDORE."

Sub-

Subjoined to the foregoing.

“MY DEAR MISS,

“You must forgive my joining Mrs. Mansel, in requesting you will oblige us with your company, as soon as can be made agreeable to yourself; the Brecknock stage sets out from Lad Lane twice a week, from whence I will fetch you—pray apprise me of the time.

I am,

With great regard,

Your humble servant,

DAVID MANSEL.”

Mr. Dalton made a merit of consenting to the thing of all others most agreeable to himself.

He promised to inquire out the stage, and examine the books, and when any female passengers were going to let her know.

The honest farmer insisted on her stay with him till the day of her departure for Wales, as she could not be received at her friend's without danger to herself.

Mr. Dalton inquired into the state of her finances, and was rejoiced to hear they stood in no need of his assistance.

The manner in which she had been dismissed from the Lodge, very slightly claimed his attention; so his end was answered, it would have been new, indeed, for him to concern himself about the means—he returned to town full of encomiums on his ward, but resolved to lose no time in getting rid of her, which he had an immediate opportunity of doing.

A clergyman's widow, who received the annual bounty, was come from Wales to London, to get the apprentice fee for her daughter, who she bound to a mantua maker, and happened to hit on a woman,

man, who, in consideration of Dalton's religious principles, and professed poverty, and being one of his hearers, very kindly accepted from him five pounds, being exactly one quarter of the sum he received from the fund of the clergy, as an apprentice fee of his daughter—Mrs. Bowen, a widow, and mother of a large family, had not worldly wisdom enough to make so good a bargain; she paid the whole sum, got her pension, and was returning home, very thankful for the benefits she had received, when Dalton was on the look out for a proper opportunity of conveying Anna to her friends.

Mrs. Bowen, though in the next parish to Llandore, lived five miles from Mr. Mansel's, but she engaged nevertheless to deliver her to Mrs. Mansel.

The stage left the town the second day after Dalton had been at Epsom, and Anna received the joyful summons, on the morning of that, on which she was required to be in town.

The old farmer and his daughter would accompany her in his one-horse chaise; and Mrs. Dalton, whose curiosity was greatly raised by her husband's description of Anna, with her own, and Mrs. Bowen's daughter, met them at the inn, where they supped, and spent the evening together in the greatest harmony, as the farmer insisted on bearing all the expence.

Mrs. Dalton parted with our heroine with many kind expressions, and invited her return when weary of Wales.—Our travellers reached the place of their destination without any one incident worth relating.

Mrs. Bowen found her son waiting for her with a single horse, and borrowing a pillion at the inn, mounted Anna behind him—As this was the first time she had ever rode on horseback, her fears obliged them to go a very slow pace; so that although

though they left Brecknock, and had but ten Welch miles, which is not above eighteen English, to go, it appeared the longest journey she had ever taken; and the craggy narrow roads, sometimes ascending nearly perpendicular, at others frightening her with their sudden declivity, and the almost barren mountains, which bore no traits of inhabitants, except the numerous flocks of sheep, contributed not a little to the tediousness of the journey; more especially as her conductor understood not her language—It was eleven o'clock, and the darkness of the night, which was likewise wet, had for the last two or three hours taken from her the power of distinguishing objects, when to her inexpressible joy they reached Llandore.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXI.

A worthy Parson and a Welch Village.

MR. Mansel's family were retired to rest ; he was in his study himself, it being Saturday night ; and his wife, used to later hours than was known in that peaceful part of the globe, where all had been silent above an hour, was undressing in her own apartment, when a loud holla at the door, where no thundering rap was ever heard, alarmed her ; she opened her unbarred window and asked who called ; but to describe the joyful extasies the good woman felt on hearing a well-known and beloved voice answer, " It is me, It is Anna ;" is impossible ; the doors flew open, the heart and arms of Mrs. Mansel expanded to receive their welcome guest ; and, then, for the first time since their separation, did Anna feel quite happy ; she was now, she thought, at home ; the rugged paths that had led to the blessed heaven of friendship were forgot ; no place could be barren or uncultivated where philanthropy lived, and where benevolence thrived.

When Mrs. Mansel shewed her to the little apartment they had allotted her, contiguous to their own, she took possession of it with the same heart-felt ease and pleasure, as if the most indulgent mother had given it her ; a sound and refreshing sleep, unalloyed by care of any kind, succeeded

ceeded the fatiguing journey, from which she did not awake till noon next day.

The good woman and her son, who Mrs. Mansel obliged to stay the night, had been gone hours before Anna was sensible of the happiness that awaited her; the embrowned mountain tops, the disagreeable and almost unfrequented roads she had passed, were yet in her mind, and Mrs. Mansel's woodbines and jasmines she set down as mere figures in rhetoric; impressed with those ideas when she advanced to her window, and feasted her eyes with a sight of the most beautiful valley nature ever formed, with not only the creepers Mrs. Mansel described, but a moss rose tree, and a myrtle actually growing into her room, she could scarce credit her senses, or believe she had not got into a fairy land.

The situation of the village of Llandore is beautifully picturesque and romantic; it stands in a fertile valley, through which runs the river Tawe, whose frequent, but harmless overflowings, give a richness and verdure more captivating to the eye, from the wild mountains which form, to appearance, an inaccessible chain on each side of the vale, which is irregularly interspersed with various old ruins, the sad memento of the faded glory and sunk dignity of the ancient inhabitants of Cambria. In the middle of a large green church yard, stood the church, and round it, in two semicircles, on the outside of the wall, were the white-washed neat dwellings of the inhabitants, with here and there a break for a better house than common, such as the parsonage, the doctor's, lawyer's, exciseman's, and Presbyterian parson's. The river was so divided above the village for the convenience of working two mills at the other extremity, that a stream of clear water ran on each side at the back of the houses, and joined, a mile farther; the

the green of their little orchards and gardens was beautifully contrasted by the snow white appearance of the walls which surrounded them. Lime was so very cheap, and cleanliness in such high estimation at Llandore, that the meanest hut vied in hue with the best house there, which was the parsonage.

This was a comfortable dwelling, where neatness and convenience was so judiciously blended, it would be difficult, and, perhaps, impossible to alter any part of it, without injury to one or the other of them; a flower garden reached from the front almost to the vestry door; at the back of it was a hanging kitchen garden and orchard, the trees so regularly planted, that from all the windows, the river which ran at the bottom, and the hill on the other side, were seen to the most charming advantage. The living was worth sixty pounds a year; Mr. Mansel had a few acres of ground to his house, and he rented a few more, just to supply his family.

Mrs. Mansel I have already described; her husband's character may be told in a few words: he was a man of liberal education; the chearful practiser of those divine and moral laws which he equally enforced by precept and example; he bore himself, in every part of his sacred function, with the honour of his master in view; he preached a plain, sound doctrine, that all might understand, and all, if they pleased, put in practice.

In the duties of religion he knew no distinction of persons; in private life he was respectful, but not servile to his superiors, affable and mild to his inferiors; in his conversation he was at once simple, elegant, and polite, though strict in his own morals, he knew how to pity frailties in others; religion was in him chearful and respectable.

He never failed solemnly to admonish, in cases of vicious excess in any of his flock ; but in the innocent diversions of the country, he was one of the first ; the song, the dance, or Christmas gambol, was incomplete without the good rector.

He was firmly attached to his wife, having the highest opinion both of her heart and understanding ; and was always in most credit with himself, when he anticipated her sentiments ; he was the Israelite in whom there was no guile ; and he had this very particular happiness, he was a person of whom every body spoke well.

On the opposite side, fronting the parsonage, but nearer the summit of the mountain, at the distance of one mile, distinguished by the numerous white chimnies which appeared to rise out of the very thick grove that surrounded it, was Llandore Castle, an ancient family mansion belonging to Sir William Edwin, but now inhabited by Mr. Herbert, who having married the favourite sister of that Baronet, was complimented by him with this place on account of its vicinity to some large iron works of which Mr. Herbert was, in right of his wife, a principal proprietor.

The view of this ancient building, which had been for ages dignified with the name of castle, and the grandeur as well as the beauty of the surrounding woods, reaching from the front down to the edge of the river, over which a regular row of white large stones formed a convenient causeway ; and from the back up to the top of the mountain, was an enchanting addition to the pleasant prospect from the parsonage ; when our heroine had time to look round her, there was an air of content and freedom in the inhabitants, a cleanliness in the look of their houses that charmed her, and the respect and veneration which the parishioners bore their rector, was extended to every part of
his

his family. Mrs. Mansel, notwithstanding she was unacquainted with their language, was soon endeared to them on her own account. "I am not," said she to Anna, (when, in shewing her every part of the house, they came to a little closet filled with medicines of all kinds) "ambitious of the character of a Lady Bountiful, but the poor people are here in general so ignorant, they frighten themselves at the idea of a doctor as well on the account of the expence, as the notion, that when the doctor is called in, death is not far distant; so that trifling medicines, and dressings are acquisitions to them, and of little expence to me; and you will not suspect me of carrying my charity so far, as to look at their wounds when they have them, or exposing my own health to the danger of infection: I am content with the theory, though I can tell you I am in general so successful in my prescriptions, that my fame is very much known, and my skill as much depended on; but I am particularly now, when to every other blessing is added the company of my beloved Anna, too sensible of my happiness, to risk, by any wilful act of my own, a change. Too good to me, and too indulgent to all my hopes, has been the Almighty disposer of my fate, not to render me thankful to heaven—I must now expect some trials."

Such were Mrs. Mansel's sentiments, and such her constant practice; her open hand, her giving heart, never retreated from the cries of distress; her charities were extended with liberality and feeling, yet they were governed by prudence; the infant and aged poor were most the objects of her regard; and by her proper management, and having nourishing things made for them at her own house,

she contrived to compass every benevolent purpose at a trifling expence.

Formed under *her* eye, taught by *her* example, and impressed with *her* ideas, the heart of her pupil ever beat in unison with her own; Anna became the chearful dispenser of charity; her youth and vivacity made the learning the Welch language easy and useful; she soon became the interpreter of the poor to her maternal friend, and their intervals of time was filled by work, reading, or music, as in the happy days at Melmoth Lodge; nor were they entirely deprived of the pleasures of society, for the lawyer's lady, as well as those of the dissenting teacher, the doctor, and the exciseman, though too rude and uncultivated to give or receive, that delicate pleasure arising from the intercourse of refined sentiments and polite manners, yet spoke English, and, with a few substantial freeholders, were never weary of testifying their respect, and love for the rector and his family, nor never so happy as when they had the pleasure of entertaining them on those occasions: the young people of the better sort were invited to join Anna, and a dance generally concluded the evening, in which the rector frequently joined.

The protection and kindness of Mrs. Mansel, was not more salutary to our heroine, than comfortable to herself; she had, indeed, whenever Mr. Mansel was called from home, found herself in a terrible solitude, but now she had a companion she tenderly loved, with whom she could most delightedly converse, whose taste and sentiments exactly corresponded with her own, and whose lively disposition, untainted with levity, diverted and amused, while the goodness of her heart, and the sweetness of her temper, endeared her not only to them, but to the whole village.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mansel had from the favours of different families in which she had lived, a large stock of all kinds of cloaths; she was happy now to put them to use, and applied herself to the transforming them for her dear Anna, whose gratitude and pleasure, if we consider the effect new things have on young minds, may be supposed very great; but allowing for youth and pride all we may, her satisfaction at receiving, was not nearly equal to that her friends felt in giving, constant proofs of unbounded affection.

When Mrs. Mansel had finished equipping her, she prepared her for the acquaintance of *one* lady, who, in that remote spot, she said, would do honour to a court; and having sent in the morning for permission, she took our heroine, after dinner, to visit Mrs. Herbert at Llandore Castle; in their way thither, the history of the family they were going to visit engrossed their conversation.

Mr. Herbert was a gentleman who could trace his pedigree nearly as long as his lady, which is saying a great deal; he married her in her nineteenth year, when in the bloom of beauty; she was the toast of the country.

Mr. Herbert was a jolly, handsome man, and at that time supposed to be so distractedly in love with Miss Martha Edwin, that if she had not consented to be united to him, he would have destroyed himself; he had a clear estate of two thousand pounds a year, his lady's fortune was five thousand pounds; but the iron works, left her by her grandmother, was a great addition to that sum, and Sir William Edwin, her brother, gave them up the castle for their country residence.

Mr. Herbert hated London; they therefore spent their winters at Bath, where they had an elegant house.

In the first years of their marriage, they were blessed with several children, two only of whom were now living, a son, in his twenty first year, completing his studies at Oxford, being designed for the bar, and a daughter of seventeen.

Mrs. Herbert was not so happy in her domestic circle as she deserved to be; her husband, from the most constant and passionate lover, and for a few years the kindest of husbands, thought proper to be weary of happiness.

His home grew insipid; his children, whose prattle was once his supreme delight, were now noisy; and his wife, whose soul and body was the assemblage of goodness and beauty, tired him with her sameness and insipidity.

Seduced by the false appearances of pleasure in the dissipated company he kept at Bath, at a period when prudent men give up their follies, his commenced, and his amiable, sensible wife, had the anguish of seeing herself deserted for, and insulted by, almost every demirep who frequented that seat of gaiety: but those indulgences cost him very dear, it impaired his constitution, and embarrassed his circumstances; air became necessary for one, but he wanted resolution to apply himself to the œconomy of the other.

He retired to Llandore, but for a time, vitiated habits are not to be conquered merely by a seclusion from company; from an intriguer in high life, Mr. Herbert condescended to become a seducer of innocence in low; the maids at the castle, in their turns, triumphed over their injured mistresses; sometimes, indeed, the truant would return to a sense of duty, and promise of amendment, but those fits of penitence were sure to be succeeded by longer and more atrocious lapses; they in time ceased to be the object of his lady's wishes; and at last after having been long miserable, rendered her resentful,
she,

she, on his removing a maid (who waited on Miss Herbert) publicly from her service into elegant lodgings, left his bed.

Mr. Herbert was too full of his new amour, to pay any regard to this act of his wife; and his mistress being artful, handsome, and extravagant, retained her influence over him, to the entire ruin both of his peace and his fortune; and so much was he wrapped up in this woman, he could not bear an absence of any length. At this period of my history, he kept her in a hired house only six miles from the castle, where he constantly visited her, regardless of the ill-requited love, and mortified pride, of one of the most amiable women, whose fine sense, and elegant person, was one despised, the other neglected; yet conscious worth and injured innocence inspired her with fortitude, and gave a dignity to her sufferings, that interested every heart but him whom it most concerned.

When business called Mr. Herbert to London, Nichols only accompanied him; but Mrs. and Miss Herbert were of his party to Bath, where they spent six months out of the twelve.

Mrs. Herbert thus forced to seek in the resources of her own mind consolation, denied her in the tenderness of her husband, transferred her affection to her children, she adored her son, and doted on her daughter.

Miss Herbert was a lovely girl, whose pleasing form was animated by a soul replete with every sentiment of generosity, gentleness, and good nature; she saw with unutterable sorrow the affliction of her worthy mother, whom she loved with an enthusiastic fondness: it was the study of her life to blunt the keen edge of her parent's woe by every act of duty and unremitting attention; her temper was mild, forgiving; she had the innocence of the dove, without an atom of gall in her composition.

C H A P. XXII.

Visits and Family Pictures.

TO ladies of the turn I have described those of Llandore Castle, it may be imagined the settlement of a sensible, well bred woman in the neighbourhood, was an acquisition. Mrs. Herbert, long sick of the unmeaning acquaintance with which the world abounds, received with pleasure to her friendship and confidence, the worthy Mrs. Mansel, nor was Mr. Mansel less a favourite with Mr. Herbert, who would not dine on Sunday without his benediction, charging him, however, to keep clear of his preachments, a hint Mr. Mansel had too much real piety always to observe, though he had the sorrow to see all arguments were ineffectual, and remonstrance unattended to by a man so vitiated, that he was above the disguise of a decent appearance; indeed so abhorrent to his own principles was the life of Mr. Herbert, that nothing but the respect and compassion he felt for the lady, would have prevailed on him to appear at their table.

Mrs. Mansel was now doubly welcome at Llandore on account of her young companion; she was introduced as a near relation of Mr. Mansel's whose name, at their request, she went by; for as she had no natural right to that of Dalton, and as her assuming it was rather an act of necessity than choice,

she

she readily changed it, not, however, till Mr. Dalton had given his permission, which was asked by Mrs. Mansel by letter.

There was on a visit at this time to Miss Herbert, a daughter of Sir William Edwin, Miss Cecilia Edwin, who was not immediately quite so gracious as her cousin with our heroine; but time so improved their acquaintance into mutual liking and regard, the young ladies and Anna became inseparable; and when a short time after Miss Edwin left Llandore, and Anna by that means was Miss Herbert's only companion, her accomplishments rendered her society as improving as it was pleasing; the graces both of her mind and person, endeared her to Mrs. Herbert, as well as her daughter; the summer passed imperceptibly, in one continued scene of tranquil happiness, which was a little interrupted in November, by the regret Anna felt at parting with her new friends, who at that time left Llandore; but though the refined pleasures of agreeable and polite conversation were, for the present, confined to the parsonage, the convivial festival of Christmas was not passed without its enjoyments; they paid and received the visits of hospitality, and the inhabitants of the village made up in friendship, good humour, and a desire to please, what they wanted in politeness, if, indeed, a sincere wish to render every kind office to those with whom we associate is not politeness in its truest sense; at other times, when the bleak winds and deep snows, or more uncomfortable cold rains, made every trifling excursion fatiguing and dangerous from the warm cheery dwelling she was bid to call her own, still the hours were marked with fresh enjoyments; reading, working, and drawing, were changed with music; Mr. Mansel's flute often accompanied the sweet pipe of our heroine; their days were those of peace and happiness; their nights blessed with rest and tranquillity.

Summer returned the valuable inhabitants of Llandore ; the six months that had elapsed, had not been more favourable to the improvement of Anna's person than her mind ; her avidity after learning increased with her opportunities ; and Mrs. Herbert was too sensible of the benefit her daughter must receive from such a companion, not to detain her, as often as possible, at the castle. In the course of the summer, Miss Herbert was strongly pressed to go to Dennis Place, and take Miss Mansel with her. Miss Edwin assured her, her cousin Lady Edwin was prepared to love and admire her friend, and that she would be highly offended with both if they did not accept her invitation. The rector and his lady, were equally loath to part with their niece, as Anna was called ; nor was Mrs. Herbert willing to be separated from her daughter, but yet she was more loath to disoblige Cecilia, whose repeated intreaties at last prevailed on her, and her's on the Mansels, to let the young ladies go, Mrs. Mansel agreeing to spend the time they were gone wholly with Mrs. Herbert at Llandore ; with many injunctions to take care of themselves, and as many to write often. Miss Herbert and our heroine were sent off in the chariot attended by one servant, and reached Dennis Place by their dinner hour, which was six o'clock ; they were received with open arms by Cecilia, and with great politeness by the rest of the family, which consisted of Sir William, Lady Edwin, and Miss Winifred Edwin, a maiden sister of the Baronet. The son and heir of Dennis Place was then on his travels ; the open-hearted hospitality that reigned in this spacious mansion, where the order, regularity, and cleanliness, could only be equalled by the plenty and liberality which was extended to all comers, was a scene perfectly new to Anna. The massy old plate, the large stud of fine horses, quantity of servants, with the magnificence of the old furniture, and the elegance

elegance of their table, gave her ideas of opulence and grandeur, to which she was hitherto a stranger, and impressed on her mind a respect and wonder which every hour increased.

They were shewn to separate apartments and had each an attendant consigned to them; a groom was likewise ordered to wait their commands with horses, whenever they chose to ride, and they had not been half an hour in the house before they found themselves perfectly at home.

When they retired, Miss Herbert asked her companion how she liked Dennis Place? It was impossible to dislike what exceeded all that *she* had conceived of elegance and grandeur; "If," said Miss Herbert, "you are not sleepy, I will give you some anecdotes of this family, which will account for the superiority of their appearance over my mamma."

This was very good, Anna told her, and she would venture to promise attention, if her obliging communication lasted the night; it was, indeed, gratifying a curiosity which arose in her mind the moment she saw the very great difference of circumstances in the brother and sister.

"It is not," said Miss Herbert, "that my mamma's first setting out in life, was inferior to her fortune or family, but my uncle's which was so superior, that occasioned the immense distance between them in point of circumstances: Lady Cecilia Edwin was one of the greatest fortunes in the principality; she fell in love with my uncle at Worcester music meeting. The old Earl, her father, having been very unfortunate in her twin brother, gave his sanction to her choice, as soon as he found my uncle's was the best blood in our country, as his was in his own; and at his death, his great estate, as well as immense personals centered in Lady Edwin and her family. My cousin,

"Hugh

“ Hugh, is as handsome as his father, but I am a-
 “ fraid not quite so good ; he is a year older than
 “ my brother Charles ; Cecilia, you know, she is a
 “ very amiable girl, and deserves the riches she is
 “ entitled to ; mamma says, Lady Edwin is a noble
 “ souled woman ; she is certainly very good ; but I
 “ know not how it is, I always feel more inclined
 “ to fear than love her ; I hope it is not a breach
 “ of the duty I owe my father, but I actually believe
 “ I love my uncle better than I do him : if you
 “ knew how kind he is to my mamma, you would
 “ not wonder at my attachment.—Never, indeed,
 “ in that respect was a happier woman ; both Sir
 “ William and Lady Edwin make her interest
 “ their’s ; and notwithstanding papa’s imprudence,
 “ they certainly intend Cecilia for my brother, but
 “ that is a secret : indeed Lady Edwin is (lowering
 “ her mild voice to a whisper) as family mad as her
 “ father was ; she would almost expire at the
 “ thought of either of her children’s marrying into
 “ one, whose pedigree did not reach as far as from
 “ hence to Llandore.”

Anna could not help laughing at this innocent
 folly in her friend, who added, “ yet mamma says,
 “ the finest young man in the world was lost by this
 “ nonsense.” After some remarks on the history
 she had communicated, they separated, as Miss
 Herbert lay with Cecilia——When they met in the
 morning, the stately air of Lady Cecilia, the sense
 of her high rank, and the value she set on good
 blood, in all which, Anna knew herself to be very
 deficient, gave her precisely Patty Herbert’s ideas ;
 she felt much more inclined to fear than to love a
 person who appeared to carry nothing about her in
 common with the rest of the world but her form,
 and that, graceful as it was, rather overawed than
 pleased—A silent, formal breakfast gave place to an
 uninteresting conversation between Lady Cecilia and
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the maiden Mrs. Winifred, on a person of the name of Trevannion (who pretended to be a distant relation to her ladyship's family) and having fallen into misfortunes, solicited relief—the roll was fetched, and the man, who was an artful beggar) examined; the account he gave was so lame, and not so much as speaking the language of the country, he was on the point of being consigned to the discipline of the servants, when Lady Cecilia recollecting herself, solemnly asked if his name was really Trevannion? The man assuring her, trembling, it was—Well, then, said she, majestically turning from him, let him go; let his name be his protection—this affair, which had been examined and treated with great solemnity ended—the young ladies withdrew to laugh over the prejudices of high blood, and Lady Edwin retired to her chamber, attended by Miss Winifred with the pedigree.

Lady Cecilia Edwin is by this time, I am afraid no favourite of my reader; I must therefore, in justice to her, enlarge on a character, not I confess, introduced in the most amiable colours, but which had so many bright lines to set off this one dark shade, I am at a loss with which to begin.

Lady Cecilia Edwin was, as Miss Herbet informed Anna, the only daughter of the Earl of Trevannion, a nobleman so strongly attached to his country, that he never but once in his life left it, to visit the court of London, and that was on the marriage of the then Prince of Wales—He was descended in a regular line from Llewellyn, Prince of South Wales, and every marriage and intermarriage in his line of ancestry, were among the descendants of some or other of the ancient Cambrian heroes—This family pride descended to his daughter; but it was not the only thing she derived from her father; a firm undaunted mind, which shrunk not from its own sorrows, while it diffused consolation and relief to those
of

of other people ; a benevolent spirit ; a soul that scorned an act of meanness ; a princely rewarder of merit ; a general benefactor to the needy ; disinterested and generous ; all these was the Earl of Trevannion, and all these was his daughter—A deviation from the pride of ancestry in his son, had totally alienated his affections ; but in the disposition of his fortune, he did not suffer himself to be prejudiced by his anger ; had Lord Trevannion lived, though banished from his father's love, he would have experienced his justice.

Sir William Edwin, so happily distinguished by the noble heiress, was of as ancient, and nearly as honourable a family as the Trevannions ; riches were trash, acres dirt, to that one consideration—it gave him the advantage of Dukes, who were suitors to Lady Cecilia, in the eyes of both father and daughter ; in those of the latter, a very fine person, was perhaps, no small addition to the respect due to his genealogy.

Lady Edwin was so tenacious of her family dignity, of which she considered herself the only support, till her son was established in the world ; that the value she set on her high birth, appeared to those who did not perfectly know her, to favour not a little of vanity and ostentation ; and her charities, which were universal, seemed more the result of pride than that blessed spirit which taught her to feel for the wretched, who never applied to her in vain—grief and affliction from whatever country it came found in her the source of comfort and relief ; but in other matters, her servants, her tradesmen, even her cattle must be Welch ; nay, so attached was she to the Cambrian stream in her veins, she would, as she often declared, rather have chose to marry her children to the peasant

of

of her own wild hills, than to nobles of any other country—on this principle it was, that she consented to give her daughter to Charles Herbert; and on this principle Sir William and herself had contracted their son to an only daughter of their next neighbour, though Miss Turbville had indeed other attractions, being an heiress in her own right to twelve hundred a year, and great personals, her parents both dying before she reached her teens—Her guardian, who lived in Dorsetshire, knowing the intended alliance, placed this young lady at her own request, at the same school with Miss Edwin, between whom and her there existed great friendship and affection—To finish the character of Lady Edwin, I must add, she was a fond wife and a good mother; very warm in her friendships, but vindictive in her resentments, which were not easily excited on any other occasion than an insult offered to her family.

Sir William was, as I have said, very handsome; he was perfectly good humoured and friendly in his disposition; loved hunting above all things but his children; his bottle next; and sorry I am to name her, after so many rivals, his lady last: indeed his passions were never greatly interested in her favour, nevertheless he respected and shewed her the utmost attention on all occasions, leaving to her management her estate as well as his own, calling on her for what money he chose to expend; for, as she had brought him such a noble fortune, he thought it but just, she should dispose of it as she best liked—Her generosity rewarded his confidence; his will was hers; and Mrs. Herbert's family she considered as her own—Sir William was very fond of his sister; he knew her husband was imprudent by her frequent applications to him for money; but had no suspicions it was for such prostituted purposes.

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He was by inheritance from father to son, knight of the shire ; and so well was he beloved, that his name carried the numbers for the town and county where Dennis Place stood—Though urged very much, he would not give up his seat for his own shire, many, very many, felt the philanthropy of his soul. Though no person living (the prime minister for the time being excepted,) ever found an enemy in Sir William Edwin, he was a constant railer at taxes ; not because he paid them, but because his friends did ; the country party was sure of *him*.

While the tenants of every estate round him had their rents raised, his grew affluent at their old prices ; hence gratitude induced those who had leases, and interested those who had not, to keep in perfect order and repair their several domains ; their stock not being obliged to be parted with, at the requisition of a needy or cruel landlord, were numerous and thriving, and the brow of contented, chearful industry, graced the door of every farm and cottage on their estate—Lady Edwin settled her steward's accounts weekly ; no tradesman or artificer were suffered to leave the house without prompt payment of their bills ; their acts of benevolence were no less well timed than general, though from the decent circumstances every poor or labouring person must be in who dwelt in the vicinity of such a house, calls of charity were very few.

Miss Winifred Edwin was, sorely against her will a maiden of forty ; but though she had found herself disappointed, in a deep-laid matrimonial scheme, by the marriage of Mr. Mansel, who with great respect declined her offered hand, pleading his engagement, as his reason for not accepting so great an honour, was yet the best-tempered creature breathing ; her ill success, injuring
neither

neither her natural good humour, or putting her out of hopes of better luck another time : she was, as indeed all the Edwins were, of a most friendly disposition, and never so happy as when up to her ears in business ; so that Miss Winifred was employed, it mattered not what.

She was the arranger of all the love quarrels in the house ; the confidant of the maids, and on all occasions of false hearts and broken vows, the terror of the men—She was sole mistress when Lady Cecilia was in town, and her right hand when in the country : as she could tell off hand every blot on the ancestry of all the old families in the principality, holding in infinite contempt, as upstarts, those who she could trace no farther than three or four hundred years : and as to people who had purchased or accidentally settled there, she never recollected their names, or saw them, though she was obliged to turn out of their way, in the road. To oblige Lady Cecilia, she at first made genealogy her study, and her proficiency as well as prejudices originating with that Lady, it is no wonder, on a theme in which they both delighted, so much of their time was spent on that : the subject was as regularly served up as the breakfast.

Miss Cecilia Edwin was a fine, tall, brown girl, bred up at a capital boarding school in London, where she never knew what it was to form a wish for any thing money could purchase, without having it immediately gratified ; the value of that article was the last thing she could possibly learn.

She was very deep read in heroic novels ; the governess, indeed, did not allow those warm improvements in the minds of her young ladies, but as in the educating our females of rank, they much oftner meet with Madame Frajans than Mrs. Barlows, the teachers were not quite so nice ; besides,

sides, it was impossible to refuse young ladies any indulgence who were continually making them presents, which the two destined sisters always had it in their power to do.

The fine feelings and sentiments therefore, of those heroines, who generally at the age of fifteen or sixteen,

“ All the turns of love’s soft passion know,”

and who preferred the gratification of that divine impulse to any earthly thing, were the favourite topics of Cecilia ; and a journey to Scotland, with some dear unfortunate, her ambition ; to keep her in credit with herself, it was necessary she should be miserable : her lively black eyes were taught to languish ; her bosom, to heave the gentle sigh ; the down-cast look and soft melancholy was assumed, in direct contradiction to a ruddy animated complexion, and a very fine flow of spirits ; indeed, one difficulty, which it was cruel she should have to encounter with, was, that of not having yet been addressed at all : and how can a young novelist be wretched alone ?—A partner must be found for the pleasing misery.

In the circle of her acquaintance she knew of none half so amiable, so attentive, so accomplished, as her cousin Charles ; and not having any suspicion of her mother’s intention to form a union between them (as the sanction of her parents would have spoiled the whole matter) she generously determined *he* should be the hero of her adventures—In the correspondence she carried on in a series of original letters, with a few of her sweet young friends, she was indeed particularly frank and communicative, in her account of the rise and progress of this amour ; relating distress she was a stranger to, circumstances that never happened,
and

and vows of love which existed only in her own heated imagination and profound reading.

Few young men visited at Dennis Place but were set down by her as unhappy lovers; they were amiable; she could approve them as friends; but, alas! her heart was bound to one dear object, in bonds which nothing but death could dissolve.

Our heroine was soon one of the confidants of Cecilia; and Miss Herbert not having had so liberal an education, could not possibly conceive a passion so well expressed could be imaginary—She believed her brother tenderly beloved by Cecilia, but had sometimes a secret doubt, whether she did not rather flatter her own wishes in her ideas of his return—He was to spend the vacation there, and she resolved to be a close observer; though a delicate regard for the pride of her cousin, forbid her dropping a hint of those doubts even to Anna; who, on her part, concluded Mr. Charles Herbert and Cecilia Edwin to be a very faithful pair of lovers.

C H A P. XXIII.

Grateful Pride.

W H E N Anna was first introduced at Dennis Place, Lady Edwin received her as a pretty country girl, who, merely from a dearth of more eligible companions, had been favoured with the notice of Mrs. Herbert; and her daughter Miss Edwin not being used to exaggerate the charms or merits of her female acquaintance, had mentioned her in this light to her mamma; adding, she was very good natured, and so great a favourite with Patty, it would be cruel to separate them. A hint was always sufficient to induce Lady Edwin to adopt any mode consistent with her own ideas of propriety, that would contribute to the happiness of another, particularly when that other was the niece and great favourite of her husband; she therefore consented to the invitation; but however obscure Anna was in other respects, when she became a guest at Dennis Place, the owners considered her as entitled to every kind of respect and politeness; *that* was continually shewn her; but Lady Cecilia being interested in her neither by curiosity, benevolence or pride, some days had elapsed before she was familiar even with the features of her face.

That intelligent index to a perfect soul was not formed long to be overlooked, the sweetness and delicacy of her animated countenance at last called forth the admiration of Lady Cecilia, and rendered the thousand graces of her person and conversation

sation the more pleasing from having been so long unobserved. Her beautiful figure now struck her as embellished with uncommon mental perfections ; and she was astonished to find, tho' young and wholly ignorant of the world, her education and accomplishments, added to a fine understanding and elegant manners, were equal to any thing she had ever met in the first circles ; they were indeed such as claimed, and were honoured with every flattering mark of distinction, and in a short time she became the favourite companion of Lady Edwin.

Anna, ever obliging and grateful, studied the wishes of a lady who had not won less on her respect and affection, and finding, as the stiff Trevannion hauteur wore off, the many great and good qualities that adorned the elevated rank of Lady Edwin, delighted in her society. She was laughed at by Miss Edwin for this stupid conduct ; but that young lady had a great deal more of her love than esteem, and she ventured to think herself right, when perhaps Miss Edwin conceived her wrong, and she was not to be laughed out of a conduct that produced pleasure and improvement.

In one of the airings Lady Edwin honoured Anna with, by giving her a seat in her cabriole, her noble conductress pointed out to her the beauty of the shrubs and flowers that grew in such profusion on the wild mountain tops ; adding, she would give the world to have the coat and train of a birth-day suit worked from them.

Embroidering was the forte of our heroine : Mrs. Mansel was herself one of the finest work-women in England, and being extremely fond of it, had rendered her pupil nearly as clever as herself. Eager to cultivate the farther good will of the lady. Anna instantly offered to finish one, by the Queen's birth-day, when Miss Edwin was to be presented.

Lady

Lady Edwin smiled at her eagerness to undertake a task which she did not believe could be accomplished, till she beheld the pencil of her young companion tracing from life, in a very masterly manner, the shrubs she admired.

A piece of rich white satin was directly wrote for, and from a temple, on the top of an adjacent hill, which served as a point of view from the place, the pattern was drawn and coloured with such taste, that the fair artist began to be spoke of as a prodigy at Dennis Place, whilst she was toasted by all the male visitors round the country, as the loveliest creature in it.

A month, the period allowed for this visit had passed rapidly ; another was pressingly asked ; but the same letter that brought consent, gave Anna the sincerest grief, Mrs. Mansel was seized with a sudden giddiness in her head,, which occasioned her falling down a stone flight of steps, and her indisposition increasing with the lameness she got by the fall, she had left Llandore Castle.

Dennis Place, its grandeur, its elegance, its beauty, the flattering distinction of Lady Edwin, the good humoured freedom of Sir William, nor the society of her young friends, had now the least attraction for Anna ; it was in vain they attempted to detain her ; Mrs. Mansel, her dear, maternal friend, her more than mother, was ill, and Lady Edwin prevailed on to send her home, with great reluctance, although her esteem was increased by the motive by which she was actuated.

She found Mrs. Mansel much worse than from Mrs. Herbert's representation she expected, and the good, the worthy rector, almost broken hearted ; but her presence diffused joy in the bosoms of both her friends ; Mrs. Mansel wept at so lively an instance of her affection, and said she should want no other doctor ; and her husband, whose
happi-

happinefs all centered in his wife, was in transports at the happy effect this fight of Anna had on her. Slow and uncertain was that good woman's recovery ; her leg, swelled and inflamed, confined her at home ; and her other complaints seldom permitted her to see any of the friendly neighbours.

This little absence, tho' it had opened a new world to Anna, by introducing her to scenes of splendor as superior to any thing she had seen at Melmoth Lodge, as Melmoth Lodge was to the Parsonage, had the effect only of endearing to her those friends it had parted her from, and that peace she had left.

She was now arrived at an age, when the advantage of Mr. Melmoth's goodness to her became conspicuous in the sense and judgment, far beyond her years, which was exhibited in all her actions ; the lessons she had received from him were those of purity and honour ; she was early taught to hold vice, whatever shape it might assume, in the most perfect abhorrence. Those precepts were industrioussly inculcated by her governess, and enforced by the natural goodness of her own heart. An entire stranger to deceit, she suspected not that in others, which she had no idea of practising herself ; she had a great share of pride, which often rendered the sense of her dependant situation on the charity of strangers, very grievous to her ; and that pride first pointed out the necessity of employing those talents to advantage God had blessed her with ; she knew the magnificence of Lady Edwin's spirit, and flattered herself, if the work pleased, which she had brought home with her, it would prevent her being entirely a burden on the generosity of her friends, whose income, now in an expensive illness, she feared must be little enough for themselves ; gladly then she began a task on
which

which so much depended, and as she chiefly sat by the bed or easy chair of her dear governess, she had the constant benefit of her advice and instruction in arranging the foil and shading the flowers.

As soon as one breadth was finished, it was sent to Dennis Place; Lady Edwin was in raptures, and returned it with a purse of twenty pounds, which she begged Anna would accept to purchase for herself, if that was possible, what would be as pleasing to her as her work was to Lady Edwin.

With equal joy and pride did Anna carry this purse to her invaluable friends; it would enable her, she told them, to look at them without confusion, if she might but hope she should be ever able to shew them the gratitude of her heart, independent of her obligations; will, said the grateful girl, (throwing herself on her knees at their feet, the purse in her offering hands) will it be ever my happy lot to administer to your comforts; wants, I trust you will have none, but is it not possible your Anna may yet live to bless her dear governess.

If the reader has ever feasted on the sensibility of generous minds, he will perhaps have some idea of the returns made by our Welch parson and his wife, to the grateful overflowings of an uncorrupted heart; if he has not, description will do nothing for him; Mrs. Mansel slept not till she had sent for linen, a new riding habit, and other articles of rural finery, for our heroine (*that* any body may understand) to the full amount of the twenty pounds.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIV.

Love in a Village.

BUT anxious as Anna was to complete her task, and lame as Mrs. Mansel still continued, they were not entirely excluded from society; Mrs. Herbert visited them constantly, and sometimes ordered her cook to the parsonage with game, or any other little delicacy she hoped the invalid might like, and dined with them to tempt her to eat. In one of those visitations, as she called them, a young man accompanied her, who had often met with Mr. and Mrs. Mansel at Llandore, but having been in England some time on business, never happened to have seen Anna.

Mr. Wilkinfon had been employed in the Iron works, I have before-mentioned, as partly the property of Mr. Herbert, who procured him from London for the purpose of overlooking and directing the works, and had so recommended himself to the company by his knowledge, ingenuity and industry, that he was admitted a partner, and allowed his share of the profits, instead of a salary, on condition of his living on the spot, and taking on him the attentive part of the business.

Mrs. Herbert was very partial to Wilkinfon; she was still more so to Anna; his prospects were great, her's were but indifferent; but the amiable qualities of her mind, and the charms of her person,

son, were, she thought, equivalent, and had made in her own ideas a match between this deserving pair. Without telling him any thing of her intention, he was invited to go to the parsonage to see a curious piece of work, but the lovely artist was not named. What she foresaw, came to pass, as far as related to Wilkinson: he fell desperately in love: but if he was charmed with Anna's person, what became of him when, drawn out by Mrs. Herbert, he heard her deliver, with equal wisdom and propriety, the sentiments of reason and rectitude, graced with the most enchanting vivacity, she was called upon to play and sing. Mrs. Herbert was one of the most valuable of women; she was not only extremely amiable in her manners, but of a sincere and friendly disposition; it was not therefore possible to refuse her request; and the wish to entertain in a manner most pleasing to herself, so kind a visitor, rendered Anna's performance worthy the friends whose partial commendations were always the height of her ambition.

Mr. Wilkinson, whose education had been far inferior to the strong natural parts he was blessed with, felt his passion for Anna, which increased every moment, blended with a fear, so lovely, so accomplished a creature was not for him, while the object of his admiration sat wholly unconscious of Mrs. Herbert's design or the power of her own charms, neither suspecting the one or interested in the effect of the other.

When Mrs. Herbert and Mr. Wilkinson left the village, that lady soon drew out of him, who was really enamoured, the state of his mind, and in return informed him of all she knew concerning Anna, viz. that she was an orphan relation of the Mansel's; that her person and accomplishments were the whole of her fortune; and that it would be, she

she supposed, a desirable thing with her friends, to marry her to an honest man of good views ; adding, she thought he was that man, and as far as she, who was partial to both, could judge, there was a very fair prospect of happiness in their union.

The result of this conversation was Wilkinson's frequent visits to the parsonage, and soon a declaration of his sentiments to the rector, who declined, according to a very foolish custom of his, returning any answer till he had consulted his wife ; and Mrs. Mansel, on her part, chose to make Anna acquainted with her conquest, and to receive her sentiments thereon, before she delivered her own.

The surprize and confusion of our heroine at this address was purely the effect of innate modesty ; untinged by the least atom of inclination for Wilkinson, or any other person, she had not considered herself as the object of his attention, nor had observed him with one jot more curiosity than she would have done his grandfather ; and so far from a partiality towards him, or indeed, any of the sex, the idea of being particularly noticed, gave her disgust rather than pleasure ; and she told her friends coolly, she was too happy in their protection to wish it changed.

A negative so truly feminine, to a proposal of such advantage, pleased Mr. Mansel ; he congratulated her on a conquest, whose character as well as circumstances, were without doubt unobjectionable ; and said, he hoped he should have the happiness of giving his dear child to a worthy young man who would be sensible of so great a blessing.

This kind of language astonished Anna ; she had no idea, so simple and so frank were her principles, that what she really meant as a positive rejection, could be turned to its reverse ; apparently alarmed and hurt at Mr. Mansel's misconstruction,

she begged not to be urged on the subject; indeed she was sure it was impossible she could ever feel such sentiments for Mr. Wilkinson, she knew Mrs. Mansel felt for him, and bursting into tears, expressed her fears that they were weary of her; — tenderly embracing her, they bid her not afflict herself; if, said Mrs. Mansel, he was an emperor, I would not urge my Anna to any act, not sanctified with her own full choice.

Her youth and inexperience were, to those worthy people, a sufficient reason for the averseness of Anna to the proposal of the young man; but as they were sure her affections were not engaged, they made him happy, by the hope, time might crown his wishes with success; as they knew her heart free from any other impressions, they advised him to pay court to her esteem, some time before he pressed for her hand, and gave him a general invitation to the house, for that purpose; he was treated with every mark of respect and friendship by the rector and his lady, whose health becoming every day more precarious, rendered this little addition to their society agreeable and entertaining, more especially as Miss Herbert returned no more that summer to Llandore, but was joined by her mother at Dennis Place.

As the long evenings approached, Mr. Wilkinson took his abode at Llandore Castle, the works where he had a house, being at too great a distance to go to, after spending his evenings, as he constantly did, at the parsonage.

He read to Anna whilst she sat at her frame, played a social pool with them at home, and when they mixed, which could be but seldom, in the diversions, the guileless inhabitants of the place contrived not to kill, but enjoy time with, he was always of the party; if they danced, he was her partner; if she rode out, he was her escort; and
when

when she walked, her companion ; but those interviews and constant opportunities, whilst it rivetted her conquest over Wilkinson, did nothing for him ; on the contrary, the more they were together, the less she found herself inclined to favour his suit.

Mr. Wilkinson was certainly a handsome, agreeable man, had something peculiarly sweet in his voice and address, very genteel in his person, far above mediocrity in understanding, and at that time about eight or nine and twenty, he was therefore very unexceptionable in both points of personal and mental accomplishments, and his circumstances now very good, were by his great industry and care, every day enlarging ; but to a heart like Anna's, whose knowledge of mankind was merely theory and book wisdom, and whose ideas, were rather from what they should be, than what they are, something more was wanting, her own sentiments were the pure effusions of innocence and virtue ; Wilkinson's might be no less so, but he had not that tender, delicate manner of expressing them, that appeared necessary to her happiness, and when, after a thousand fruitless attempts to speak, wherein a true lover, whose passion is unassured of success, always appears to disadvantage, he disclosed in faltering accents the strong and respectful affection he bore her, he had the mortification of hearing from lips unaccustomed to deviate from truth, and unacquainted with those artifices deceit in one sex renders necessary in the other, a firm and cool refusal of his offers, his grief is not to be expressed.

With a full heart and dejected countenance he repaired to Mr. Mansel's study, whose disappointment, the effect of his affection for Anna, at this steady perseverance in her first declaration, was almost as great as the lover's ; Mrs. Mansel, how-

ever, declined herself, and requested the same forbearance from the rector, interfering in a matter on which the happiness of her dear young friend so materially depended, and it was in vain the enamoured Wilkinson intreated her interest; all he could obtain was, to continue his present footing in the family, an advantage he made the most of, being seldom absent, and taking care to favour the report of his being actually engaged to Miss Mansel, which, indeed, from their being always seen together, was universally believed.

C H A P. XXV.

A new Acquaintance.

ON the last day of the year Lady Edwin's satin was taken out of the frame, and sent to London; the encomiums bestowed, by the best judges on the work of Anna, was not more flattering to her pride, than the present that accompanied them, was to the grateful feelings of her heart. Mrs. Mansel accepted the office of banker to her, and a new piece of work was directly set about for Miss Edwin.

Early in the spring, Mrs. Herbert's family returned to Wales; Anna, in her eighteenth year, and Miss Herbert in her twentieth, had now formed the establishment of a friendship no less lasting than

than sincere ; the girlish amusements they had before adopted, were given up for more noble, and useful pursuits.

The foundation of sense and taste, first laid by Mr. Melmoth, and carefully improved by Mrs. Mansel, were rapidly increasing to perfection in the mind of Anna ; and those two ladies, both of the best dispositions, were of mutual benefit to each other.

Miss Herbert's education had been liberal, tho' not expensive ; and at Bath, where they spent so considerable a part of the year, gave her an acquaintance with the great world, of which our heroine was perfectly ignorant.

On the other hand, Anna, in her uninformed state, possessed a fund of book-knowledge ; her sentiments were all the offspring of those impressions which her early advantages had engraved on her mind ; with constant reading, she had happily blended great taste and judgment ; she was blessed with a retentive memory ; and the sort of things she chose to entertain her friend with, in return for her lessons on polite life, were of a nature to be very well received by a sensible young woman ; in fine, they were quite satisfied with each other, and so fond of being together, that Mrs. Herbert consented Patty should spend one week at the parsonage, on condition Mrs. Mansel would spare Anna the other to Llandore.

In this friendly intercourse, without a single anxious thought to interrupt the serenity of the passing hour, except Mrs. Mansel's health, which then wore a more flattering aspect than it had lately done, was spent May, June, and July.

At this period, a young stranger to Anna made his appearance at Llandore ; Mr. Charles Herbert and our heroine were perfectly acquainted with each other's character, and were mutually prejudiced

diced by the descriptions they had heard ; but high as his expectations were raised, the young student could not conceal his surprize, when his sister introduced him to her friend ; to him she indeed appeared,

More than painting can express,
Or youthful poets fancy when they love.

It was happy for him his mother had fore-armed him with the intelligence (she believed true) of her being engaged to Wilkinson, and that his notions of honour were of the old Cambrian stamp, which forbid invading the sacred right of another.

Mr. Herbert was at this time in his twenty-fourth year ; had a very fine figure, and possessed an open, honest, manly countenance ; eyes, that when his own was affected, spoke to the heart ; fine teeth, and pleasing address.

He was one of the bravest, yet most compassionate of men ; at the instant that a sense of injury roused the lion in his soul, a tale of woe melted him to what is called womanish weakness.

His purse was open to the claims of the needy ; he was too generous to be rich, and too sincere to be reckoned a saint.

Indeed, some little irregularities in the female line rendered Mrs. Herbert uneasy, lest he should inherit his father's indiscretion ; but every doubt of his conduct vanished when she saw him.

He was the most dutiful and affectionate son in the world ; and his mother, in his opinion, the first woman in it.

He was passionate, the fault perhaps of his blood, but forgiving.

He was frank to a degree, some people would say of imprudence ; but it was the frankness of an honest heart, which having in it nothing to hide, cared not who saw into its inmost recesses.

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To say the thing that was not, was, in his estimation, the most contemptible of all vices ; and to affect what he felt not, the most difficult of all tasks.

The profession which he was designed for obliged him to apply himself much to study, but nothing was farther from him than pedantry ; he was doted on by his parents ; Mr. Herbert was proud and fond of him, and Patty and him appeared to have but one heart between them.

Such as he was, the first interview convinced Anna there were men, and this was one, much nearer to her standard of perfection than Wilkinson, who was present, and did not, in her secret comparison, appear to the advantage he certainly wished.

What escapes the eye of love ? the admiration of Herbert, as he examined the faultless countenance of Miss Mansel, the attention with which he regarded her every act, and the approbation visible in his tale-telling eyes when she spoke, conveyed a thousand fears into the bosom of poor Wilkinson ; jealousy, for the first time, found a place in his imagination ; if, when the object he adored saw only him, or received not the least attention from any male being but himself, she preserved her coldness and declined his love, what had he not now to fear, when an amiable and accomplished rival might be ready to seize every advantage her indifference to him could give ?

One only means struck him, to avert the dreadful blow ; he knew the honour, the probity of the principles of young Herbert ; he was sure he could not be guilty of injuring him, if once he conceived Anna his affianced right ; their engagement, he knew, would be security from any attempts to supersede him in her affections ; and this artifice, the first he had ever been guilty of, he put in

practice the moment an opportunity offered ; gravely and roundly asserting his engagement, which being innocently corroborated by Mrs. Herbert, and believed by every body in the neighbourhood, admitted not a doubt with Charles Herbert ; he congratulated Wilkinson on his happiness, telling him his choice was the most lovely creature he had ever seen ; and added, with his native frankness, if she had been free, he must have been her slave.

The neighbouring gentry, as those in that country are called, who live within twenty miles, pouring in to visit young Herbert, occasioned a short cessation to the happy hours our two young friends were used to dedicate to the most refined friendship ; Anna, at her earnest request, was suffered to stay at home till the bustle was over ; and Miss Herbert, when the company consisted only of gentlemen, always joined her at breakfast ; sometimes her brother, whose fraternal love would not suffer his sister to walk so far alone, accompanied her ; but as Anna felt a something like embarrassment in his company, which preventing her inviting his stay, he returned after the salutations of the morning ; soon however they, to the grief of Wilkinson, returned to their old mode ; he, whenever he could break from his business, attending on Anna.

Mr. Herbert was fond of music, he played on several instruments, sung with taste, and his voice was pleasing and melodious ; Wilkinson liked to hear Anna sing or play, but as to music, he could not tell a jig from Handel's best composition ; his society, which had been agreeable, became teasing and tiresome ; his attention was rude, it robbed her of the conversation of a sensible man, whose pleasure, when he entertained her, shone in his fine eyes ; it was certainly ill bred in Wilkinson

kinson to take his offered place, when he happened (which indeed was often the case) to be sitting next her; and she could not conceive the reason why, if they walked or rode out, he was at once so eager to be near her, and yet resign his place the moment Wilkinson came!

But it pleased, she saw; Mr. and Mrs. Mansel, and Mrs. Herbert visibly favoured his address; therefore she said nothing to them; and to him she had no opportunity, as he never touched on his passion when alone, altho' he provokingly adopted in public the intire appearance of a favoured lover; this, however, happened but twice a week; the intermediate space, no jealous lover to interrupt the morning rambles or evening conversation, she was the object to whom Mr. Herbert addressed both his speech and attention. Unconscious of any wish, but what was authorized by virtue and honour, and won by his modest display of his own superior knowledge and learning, all reserve wore off; she sung and played his favourite songs, walked with him, and listened, delighted, when he read, as he undertook to do, Milton, which was his favourite author, to his mother and the two young ladies.

Thus happily passed August and September; but a letter which then arrived, announcing the intention of Miss Edwin to honour them with a visit, interrupted those charming parties.

Two months before Anna would have rejoiced to see Cecilia; now it would quite derange their amusements; besides, Miss Edwin was in love with Mr. Herbert, and Mr. Herbert was in love with Miss Edwin. Well, certainly love was no improver of conversation, as was proved in Mr. Wilkinson, who never appeared but to interrupt it; and indeed she so little liked such society, she would stay at home; her work had been strangely neglected;

neglected; Mr. Herbert could not possibly now go on with Milton; Miss Edwin would hardly attend to it, notwithstanding how delightfully he went through those beautiful passages.

Well, positively he should not have his happiness interrupted by her, while Miss Edwin was with him.

Forming this plan, as she was crossing the vale, out of a winding path which opened to the road, appeared Charles Herbert; whether conscious she was out of humour by anticipation, from surprise, or from any other cause, she blushed deep as scarlet, and then instantly turned as pale as death.

Mr. Herbert, I have told my reader, was good natured, and compassion itself; he flew to her, and inquired, with undissembled anxiety, the reason of her agitated looks; apologized for coming so suddenly upon her, which he acknowledged himself the more culpable for, as the little copse of wood, out of which he came, hanging on the side of the hill, had given him a sight of her from the time she had crossed the river, and he had come out with a foolish intent to surprize her; but the fright he had put her in had been his severe punishment; he should not exist till she pardoned him.

Anna had, by this time, recollected herself, and apologized in her turn for alarming him; but do you forgive me, Miss Mansel, said he, offering his spreaded hands; will you be friends? still holding his open hands to invite hers, which, after some hesitation, she extended to him. The glow of sensibility, added to the natural bloom of his complexion; he dropped with an involuntary emotion on one knee, as trembling he pressed it to his lips; for ever hallowed be the sacred touch of spotless purity, said he, as she, much agitated
withdrew

withdrew her hand; how blessed, the man on whom those eyes are turned with partial favour! Oh! Anna, still does the crimson glow animate that charming face, and still you are disturbed; fear not me, my lovely friend; be assured you are safe from every thought of injury. I would be the champion of your honour, my life's blood should freely flow in your defence, but my soul respects the union of hearts; not even for you would I tinge my honour with a wish to break the peace of confidential love; why then this silence, this reserve? ah! exclaimed he, I see the reason!

Out of the opposite path from the wood, with hasty step and disturbed countenance, to the surprise of Anna, came Wilkinson.

A deeper glow if possible now took possession of her features, while he, without returning her salute, fiercely passed them; not knowing why, her confusion increased, she turned to look after him, and met the eyes of Herbert, bent on her with pensive, tho' observant looks. I see, Miss Mansel, said he, sighing, the imprudence I have been guilty of; happy, happy man; but I will set him right. With those words he darted after him, leaving Anna without power to detain him; tho' she wanted not inclination to rectify the error she saw him under; he soon returned arm in arm with Wilkinson, begging forgiveness for his behaviour.

Anna bridling, said, she really was not offended; Wilkinson attempted to take her hand; heavens, what an insult! what would Charles Herbert think? her eyes struck fire.

I have before observed she was very warm in her resentments, and her countenance shewing the emotions of her mind, Mr. Herbert very prudently walked away, leaving the lover to plead his own cause;

cause ; the moment he was gone, the assured look it had cost Wilkinson great pain to assume, dropped into dejection and despair.

Sadly convinced, no hopes remained for him, but those founded upon the mistake of Mr. Herbert, he trembled at the idea of a discovery ; yet he wanted not penetration to see his conduct, far from conciliating the affection of Anna, provoked and disgusted her ; but still he had hopes, and while that remained, could not prevail on himself to change a conduct which appeared to be the only means of preserving it ; but now, when alone with her, who well knew the fallacy of the reports he had circulated, or at least encouraged the circulation of, what could he plead in support of, what plainly appeared to her a piece of contemptible art !

He fell at her feet, implored her compassion ; the artifice love had suggested was the only one he knew, he had therefore only to give vent to his feelings to be very eloquent ; he deprecated her anger, entreated her pardon, and pleaded the irresistible impulse of the fondest passion ; he wept and kneeled by turns.

The heart of Anna, naturally soft and tremblingly alive to sympathy and compassion, was now unaccountably hardened ; she saw, for the first time, a duplicity that hurt her the more, as it was plainly the effect of premeditated design ; and when she reflected that Mr. Herbert, (tho' his opinion was nothing to her) was the dupe of that design, all the anger and resentment in her disposition was levelled at Wilkinson ; and should she continue her walk to the castle with him, would it not be confirming, by her own act, a deception on her friends. Quick as thought she turned from the possibility of again letting him triumph in his success, and, without

out deigning to answer him, went back to the village, and surprized her friends by her re-appearance at the parsonage.

C H A P. XXVI.

A String of Resolutions.

WILKINSON followed her steps, tho' all this pleading could not obtain an answer; she alledged a pain in her head as the excuse for her speedy return, and immediately retired to her chamber, followed by Mr. Mansel, who desired she would have some whey; she thankfully declined taking any thing, saying a little rest would certainly relieve her, and begged to be left quite alone.

Her reflections on the transactions of the morning were embittered by the disposition of mind in which Charles Herbert had left her; she again recalled to her memory every thing that had passed; confused as she was herself, the trembling of his hand as he held hers, yet dwelt on her mind; his voice ever pleasing, was then modulated into a tenderness that thrilled thro' her heart; with what feeling did he express his friendship, amiable man! why should she deceive him? why impose on Mrs. Herbert and Patty! for, great as their friendship,
and

and unreserved as their intimacy had been, love had never been the subject of their confidence.

If Miss Herbert had any attachment of that kind, she had not disclosed it to Anna; she had heard (who in the neighbourhood had not?) the terms Wilkinson was on with her friend, and she observed nothing in the behaviour of either, violently to contradict it; but as Anna never entered on it herself, and as Patty rather avoided than sought her confidence, it was a subject that was never spoke of between them; the lover was evidently the most fond and attentive of men, and Anna the most easy and indifferent of women; but knowing her circumstances, it was natural to infer it was a match on her side of conveniency, more especially as it was not till very lately, (nor yet seen by Miss Herbert,) that Wilkinson's civilities were disgusting, or that he was very rapidly incurring the dislike of her he loved.

Whatever were the young lady's reasons, she had been totally silent on the subject; but her silence appeared to Anna, now that she revolved over every thing that had passed with respect to Wilkinson, the effect of his artifices, and she resolved no longer to suffer her to rest under such mistaken notions.

The deceiving her friend, was now a matter of infinite importance; she would beg Mrs. Mansel to decline the hateful visits of Wilkinson; she would inform Mrs. Herbert of her repugnance to the match; she would entreat her dear Patty to assist her in reconciling all parties to her determination, of hearing no more of a passion she never had, nor ever could approve.

This resolution cured the head-ach; and was no sooner formed, than impatient to put it in practice, she went down stairs. Mr. Mansel was in his study; the earnest and attentive posture she found

found him in, listening to Wilkinson, who was in agitated and serious discourse, together with the tears which were rolling down the wan cheeks of Mrs. Mansel, disconcerted and surprized her; they were no less embarrassed at her appearance, which put a sudden period to their conversation.

But too much bent upon freeing herself from addressees she so much disliked, and determined on immediately throwing herself on the indulgence of Mrs. Mansel, her confusion for a moment only prevented the commencement of her plan; her head full of what it was her intention to say to her friend, she begged her company round the garden; and full indeed it must have been, to suffer her to make such a request, as months had elapsed since that Lady had put her foot to the ground, as her lameness obliged her to have a bed below to which she was lifted, not being able to get up stairs.

Mrs. Mansel looked her surprize, and without answering, pointed to her lame leg then on a stool. Anna immediately felt the folly of her inconsiderate conduct, and still more disconcerted, begged her pardon, for having one moment out of her mind a calamity, she so sincerely deplored. To this apology, the tears of sensibility and gratitude gave an unspeakable grace, and all was forgot.

Wilkinson, to her great mortification, stayed to dinner; a servant soon after being sent by Miss Herbert, to ask the reason of Anna's not coming as she promised, was returned with an excuse of her having been taken ill.

In the afternoon Mr. Mansel generally rode out, for the purposes of giving his beloved wife the air behind him. Mrs. Mansel, as she had Anna at home, would have declined it; but *she*, ever forgetting her own in the interest of her friends, urged them to go, not recollecting that she must either stay at home in the most disagreeable *tête à tête* with

with Wilkinson, or by accompanying them, be seen again as his companion abroad ; of two evils, she chose the last as least ; a little pad they kept for her was therefore got ready, and out they sallied.

But as this was to be a day of mortification to our heroine, they had not got a quarter of a mile from the parsonage, before they were met by Mr. and Miss Herbert, coming to make a charitable visit to their sick friend. The raillery of Miss Herbert, not more than the grave looks of Charles, threw Anna into confusion ; the very thing she had resolved to avoid, she was now doing, Wilkinson kept his station close by her side, and spight of all she had resolved, again exhibited the successful lover. Patty, ignorant of what had happened, and still continuing good-naturedly to rally, and chide her by turns, for disappointing them of the pleasure of her company, to the astonishment of all present, Anna burst into a violent flood of tears.

Miss Herbert, alarmed and grieved at the effect of her harmless mirth, made a thousand apologies ; Mr. Mansel's looks spoke more than his words ; and Mrs. Mansel's eye glistened in sympathetic tenderness ; Wilkinson was officiously kind ; Mr. Herbert's countenance underwent a thorough change ; the grave cast gave place to tenderness and compassion, yet during their short ride he spoke very little, and appeared glad when it was ended.

Miss Herbert staid tea with her friend, but her brother set off on a hard gallop before they entered the village, as his mother, he said, would expect him ; and Wilkinson had half an hour's private conversation with the rector, before he waited on Miss Herbert home.

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The moment they were gone, Anna, whose whole heart was full of her design, and who had suffered unspeakably from the delay of a few hours, related the occurrence of the morning, adding her indignation at Wilkinson's conduct, which was increased by the conviction, that he wished to make people believe she was engaged to him ; and concluded with begging Mrs. Mansel would indulge her, by declining his constant visits, or at least permit her to refuse his particular attendance on herself.

Both her friends appeared much distressed at the determined manner of her expressing her dislike, it grieved them to find she had taken to a person, whose disinterested affection they had hoped would surmount all her objections. Mrs. Mansel answered, she was exhausted by her ride, but would talk the matter over with her in the morning ; when, if she continued inflexible, they would press, what in their opinion was of the greatest moment to her, no more.

Anna, who had always thought what her governess said, wisest, virtuous, discreetest, best, understood, to her great concern, that what she asked, would, if granted, be owing to their indulgence to her, in opposition to their own judgment, as well as wishes ; and this idea doubled all her obligations to them ; they forebore to urge her to accept a settlement, which would ease them of the expence of supporting her, an expence she trembled to think they could so ill afford, as Mrs. Mansel's illness had been, and still was, of the nature to require the first advice and assistance, which was procured, at great cost, from the distance of which doctors of any eminence resided.

It is true, Lady Edwin's generosity had been extremely acceptable to them on that account, but that was a resource not likely to continue ;
and

and to live always on the bounty of her friends was insupportable ; yet to marry merely for a maintenance was worse, as it was offering injury in return for love.

Those thoughts kept her awake most part of the night, and she rose in the morning to meet her friend, with pale face and swelled eyes.

Mrs. Mansel slept very little better ; her care for the welfare of the young person she tenderly loved, and for whose prosperity she had the most maternal solicitude, increased as her own feeling convinced her, she should soon be called out of a world, where, notwithstanding her christian resignation, her affections were so strongly bound ; she foresaw if Anna was not settled, she must have many difficulties to encounter, and if Mr. Mansel should likewise be called away, he had nothing to leave her ; alone, in a world, where innocence and honour is the common prey of mankind, and where triumphant vice looks into silence the pleas of modest merit, of what service would be the delicacy of her sentiments ? the rectitude of her principles, or the elegant simplicity of her manners ; her beautiful person, far from being of advantage, what would it excite, but the spirit of seduction, in the men, and envy in the women ! who would protect her ! and how would it be possible for her, whose heart sought alliance with all God's creatures, to be guarded against wiles she had no conception of ! or to support her disappointment, when, after mixing with mankind, she should be sadly convinced, the virtues she honoured, and the benevolence she adored, existed so sparingly among the sons of men !

Mr. Wilkinson had exceedingly alarmed and distressed her, by his account of the interview in the wood ; he saw, or fancied he saw, a growing attachment between young Herbert and Anna ;

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the first he concealed, but gave the latter with all he had observed, and all that fear and jealousy painted to his own jaundiced imagination, in the most glowing colour to Mr. and Mrs. Mansel; he exaggerated the youthful gaiety of Herbert into a spirit of libertinism, and adduced the dissipation of the father, the dependence of the son on the Edwins, and the well-known pride of that family, as reasons why it was impossible he could address her on honourable terms.

Mrs. Mansel was too well acquainted with the innate purity of her pupil, to doubt her being betrayed into any blameable or imprudent act, but she was not so secure with respect to her peace; she had a great share of sensibility, and so perfectly artless, that nothing like suspicion approached her ideas; she was therefore the more likely to be the victim of credulity in her first impressions. Mrs. Mansel's knowledge of Herbert's family concerns confirmed Wilkinson's report, who, under so respectable a sanction, ventured to hint the injury to the peace, as well as character, of Anna, her intimacy with so dangerous and insinuating a young man, might produce; and added, the only means entirely to preserve the honour of their relation, was to unite their interest with his entreaties, to prevail on her to become his wife.

Mr. Mansel readily coincided with this advice; and the alarm given by the intelligence of the jealous lover being confirmed by the behaviour of Anna, induced Mrs. Mansel to promise her influence, but at the same time conditioned with her husband, that if they found the peace of Anna likely to be affected by her compliance with their request, it should be at once given up; and as the salt water had been prescribed to Mrs. Mansel, she would take her with them to Swansea, where
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the rector had a relation, from whom they had received strong invitations, and keep her there till Mr. Herbert left Llandore; absolutely declining, tho' much urged, to attempt to fetter her inclination.

When Anna attended her friend, over-powered with a sense of obligation, and expecting the strongest efforts in favour of a man she thoroughly disliked, in the light he proposed himself; sorrow and apprehension took from her the power of utterance, and she stood before Mrs. Mansel the emblem of silent dejection; the tears rolled down her cheeks from her averted eyes, but the kindness of the maternal woman reassured and comforted her; her questions were equally blended with kindness and wisdom; and the cool, yet strenuous efforts made in favour of Wilkinson had the aid of reason and interest to support them; his unbounded affection, his opulent prospects, present eligible settlement, and unimpeachable moral character, were urged in opposition to the repugnance avowed by Anna, who, ashamed of having no argument to offer but what originated in self, while all those of her friends were so noble, and utterly disinterested, heard in silence the pleadings of friendship in behalf of love, unable to procure from her a single hope, or to draw her out of a silence, the most decisive against the point she sought to carry. Mrs. Mansel, at length told her, she would no farther urge a matter, on which depended her peace in an awful moment she knew was approaching; that her heart had built on it as the sweetest cordial hope could give; that when, in fond contemplation of the beauties both of her mind and person, the sad prospect of her destitute situation, when she should be no more (particularly if Mr. Mansel was likewise to meet an early fate) overcame her; that then she sought and received
consolation

consolation in the security of her peace and welfare, under the protection of an honest man, whose principles and power were equally flattering to her wishes ; but if she must give up this darling prospect, she entreated Anna would indulge her with one promise, which was that of consulting Mr. Mansel on the disposal of her heart, before it was too late to recal it.

Anna, drowned in tears at this affectionate speech, delivered with a painful solemnity by the person she most loved and respected on earth, whose countenance spoke at once the ravage of sickness, and too, too plainly confirmed the melancholy presage which flowed from her lips, in an agony of grief, threw herself at her feet.

Oh! my more than mother, cried she ; her voice interrupted, and almost choaked by the violence of her emotions, dear, blessed monitress of my youth, ever kind and valued friend of my heart, spare, oh! spare your Anna ; can I rob you of one moment's happiness ! is it *me*, who would die to give you pleasure, that takes from the peace of your dying hours ; that sharpens the keen edge of pain ? Oh! dispose of me as you please ! I am yours ! teach me how to repay the tenderness you have shewn my helpless youth, to cheer the heavy hour of sickness, and be assured whatever are the secret sacrifices I make, how strong soever my repugnance, how unconquerable my dislike, I never, never more will oppose your wishes ; I will, bursting into fresh tears, if you bid me, to-morrow give my hand to Mr. Wilkinson !

Oh! Anna, my dearest girl, returned Mrs. Mansel, this consent must not be taken on so solemn an engagement ; I doubted not but my entreaties would have this effect on your ductile heart ; but to take advantage of your grateful sorrow for a departing friend, would be to engrave her on your
memory,

memory, with the bitter accompaniment of remediless grief, without hope of change, but the awful one that will reunite us. I will urge you no more; be comforted, continued Mrs. Mansel; far be it from me to discourage my Anna, by insinuating the world, bad as it is, has no accommodation for innocence and virtue, without uniting them in opposition to inclination. But oh! my child, embracing her, though I could see you enter the busy scenes to which you are yet a stranger, without a single apprehension for your honour, here, even here, I tremble for your tranquillity; be upon your guard; you are deserving of every thing; but alas! it is not the most deserving that are the most happy.

She then entreated the weeping orphan to preserve the same appearance to Wilkinson, till their return from the excursion she proposed, when they would entirely put a period to addresses which were so disagreeable, but not once hinting her suspicion of the partiality she had been accused of; rightly concluding, if it had any other foundation than Wilkinson's jealousy, time, absence, and her own good sense, would be much more likely to operate, while the secret was confined to her own bosom, than if she had the least reason to suppose it was discovered.

C H A P. XXVII.

Polite Friendship.

THE preparations they were now to make for their little journey, prevented so much of her time being spent at Llandore Castle; and another reason to restrain her visits there, if she was earnest in her resolutions, soon arrived in the person of Cecilia Edwin, who, with both her cousins, surprised Anna in a deep reverie, looking across the vale at the white chimneys of Llandore.

If the year which had passed since the meeting of Cecilia and my heroine, had matured the personal as well as mental graces of the latter, it had not been less busy, nor made fewer alterations, in those of the former. The winter spent in London, where she had been presented, and where her great fortune and family, and their consequent attractions, had stamped their own value in pretty legible characters, on every part of her behaviour, and actions, were circumstances that could not fail of enlarging those ideas of gallantry, which in her earlier years had influenced her conduct, tho' they had not quite effaced the impressions love and heroism had made over her mind. She was at present a kind of middle character, between a sentimental novelist, and a town coquet; her dress was so much to the very extreme of the fashion, that it was not in the remote region of Llandore only she was an object of wonder and curiosity, she had the satisfaction of being generally stared at in the metropolis.

Her clear brown complexion, where the blood had been formerly seen to mount on every little occasion, was now hid by the politer daubings of rouge; and her fine glossy black hair, lost in a paste of pink powder and pomatum. Anna was the sweetest girl in the world, and her confidential friend, with whom she regularly corresponded; yet it was matter of wonder to her, how her cousin Patty could exist in that corner of the world, with no other companion than such a demure piece of still life; she was nevertheless in raptures at the sight of her, tho' really it was with regret she observed great alteration in her, and it mortified her to say, those alterations were not for the better.

This opinion of Miss Edwin, was not only contradictory to *our* sentiments, but her *own*; she felt that partial as she was to her *dear* self, the advantage of her sweet friend, was too great for the candour, or sincerity of so very fine a lady; but whatever other changes had happened in the course of the winter, Charles Herbert was still her male favourite, although it was no fault of Miss Edwin, that she yet retained her name; a peer not much older than her father, Sir William, having been a very warm advocate for her changing it to his own, but was refused by Lady Edwin, on account of the obscure original of his parent.

Cecilia Edwin finding in her collection of new novels, the amiable heroines of most of them were married, and not only contrived to keep their old lovers, but attract new ones, notwithstanding their coverture, found great temptations in the title and riches of Lord Sutton, and not foreseeing her mother's objection, had already obliged most of her corresponding friends with an account of the severity of that fate, which in obedience to the commands of her parents had obliged her to unite herself to a rich disagreeable old man, while her

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heart was attached to the most amiable, the most charming youth in the world.

That youth she now shone on, in full lustre, the regard he actually had for so near a relation, the respect due to her rank, and immense fortune, and the consideration of family obligations, all operated on the mind of young Herbert, and induced him to treat Cecilia with affection as well as politeness; when they walked, she hung on his arm; he was her escort on horseback; and tho' he said he did not *now* love dancing, when he was forced into one, Cecilia was his partner, and he was her beau on every occasion; indeed, she had not a doubt of her absolute rule in his heart; but however pleasing such a lover was in the country, shew, equipage, and the dear round of fashionable pleasures, was in London a thousand times more delightful; so that tho' she yet possessed, and did feel a penchant for her cousin Charles, she by no means designed him the supreme favour of her hand and fortune.

Cecilia's idea of the increasing love of Mr. Herbert was in some degree confirmed by an alteration in his temper, and she imputed it to the respectful timidity that tied his tongue; this alteration was, I must own, not of the most brilliant kind; from the best tempered, chearful creature existing, he was become peevish, and melancholy; man delighted not him, whatever woman might do; even Cecilia's company was often avoided, and a solitary ramble preferred to her lively conversation; his appetite failed, and a general languor pervaded his whole frame; Mrs. Herbert, grieved at an alteration which alarmed her for his health, and Mr. Herbert, who hated Wales himself, condemned that charming retirement as the cause of his son's change.

When the ladies surprised our heroine, as I have related, at the parsonage, she was deep in thought on the instability of all human felicity; Miss Ed-

win's arrival at Llandore she had heard of, and figured to herself the same happy parties, in which she had heretofore shared; her seat in the grove, her voice in the Trio, her courted judgment and applause at the readings, were now filled by Cecilia, —and a deep sigh followed those reflections, —tears starting into her eyes, when they were dispersed by the sight of those who had excited them.

Miss Herbert severely reproached our heroine for her long and frequent absences from the castle; and Cecilia insisted nothing now must keep her from thence. The emaciated looks and weak state of health in which they saw Mrs. Mansel, was Anna's best apology for the seeming neglect of her friends, and the intended journey to the sea mentioned with regret, as it would still longer deprive her of the honour of attending them; the ladies, however, would not stir, without her promise of spending some part of every day with them till her departure.

Mrs. Mansel, tho' the company of my heroine was the only thing besides that of her husband's, in which she delighted, considering the importance of the acquaintance of people of rank to her young orphan, readily consented to their request, and she engaged to spend the next day with them.

This appointment was a dagger to the heart of Wilkinson, who was present, but it was not to be prevented, nor what was worse, could he possibly attend her, as he was engaged to go to Bristol on business of the iron works with Mr. Herbert; he was lost in the anguish of his own reflections when the Llandore family left the parsonage, and Anna, as intent on her own thoughts, sat at the window, her eye eagerly following their steps, as they descended the slope, but soon unable to conquer her emotions, she turned from the sight of the gay Cecilia,
hanging

hanging on the arm of her cousin Charles, and meeting the dejected look of her desponding lover, all her dislike changed to pity.

Low spirits, a complaint very new to her, she had been lately much troubled with; a fit now seized her, tears filled her eyes, and sighs rent her bosom; Wilkinson saw not one, nor heard the other; his heart was too full of his own vexation, to attend to any thing else; and to prevent a renewal of the intimacy at the Castle his present meditation; Anna had long left the room before he was sensible he was alone; no remedy, no invention offering to aid his wishes, he was obliged to take leave of the family, with his heart torn by regret, jealousy and apprehension.

C H A P. XXVIII.

More Love Matters.

THE next morning after having tried every gown and cap her wardrobe afforded, and consulted, for a much longer period than usual, her glass before it was possible to determine on those most becoming her complection, Anna at last fixed on a sprigged muslin gown, tied with lilach ribband, a chip hat decorated with the same colour, and her own fine hair, fastened up with a comb.

Blooming and fresh as the blowing myrtle in her bosom, she began her way to the Castle by the same path, where she had the interview with Herbert, which was so deeply engraved on her memory; when the turning path presented itself to her view, her conscious blood mounted in her cheek, a sigh involuntarily forced its way—she stopped.

A rustling among the trees announced an intruder, who appeared in the distant figure of Herbert;—he was presently before her.

He apologized for a second time intruding on her privacy, and asked with a smile, if he was now in danger of interrupting an assignation?

Anna, piqued at the question, walked on with a slight courtesy.

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The offence was increased, by a farther enquiry, whether the happiest of *all* happy men was to meet or overtake her.

When he spoke intelligibly, she would answer.

He saw she was angry, he told her; but froward spirits, spoiled by indulgence, were apt to be ungovernable.

Meaning mine, Sir? answered Anna.

Oh, no! returned he, sighing.

Mr. Wilkinson's then?

Not him neither!

Your own Sir? smiling.

Ah! answered Herbert, that smile, that look!—yes, madam, I own, mine is the ungovernable, the froward and repining spirit, your indulgence has ruined.

Anna looked astonished.

You are surprized—but do you conceive it nothing; to be blest in your society! to hear the accents of divinity from your lips! to have no one desire beyond beholding you! to be fed by your smiles, with the fond hopes of your friendship! and have those blessings dearer, heaven knows, than existence, at once torn away! to see absence and cold reserve take place of friendship and condescension! Ah! Anna, never, never may you feel the anguish of unrequited *friendship*.

But I leave you—whatever are my own feelings, let me not a second time wound yours.

With these words, the unaccountable Herbert disappeared, leaving Anna in a state of mind, that would have again tempted her to return to the parsonage, had she not feared to alarm her friends.

With trembling steps she pursued the path to the Castle, and was met at a little distance from it by Miss Edwin and Patty Herbert; Charles soon joining them in company with some young ladies and gentlemen, who by invitation dined there.

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A harp and violin being in the neighbourhood, Mrs. Herbert procured their attendance; and a little ball in the afternoon gave Miss Edwin an opportunity of exhibiting to advantage her graceful person in a minuet with young Herbert; they were both deservedly applauded; and a young lady who sat by Anna, whispered her, the two cousins looked born for each other; it was pity they should ever be parted; did not she think so? She bowed assent, but her tongue refused its office. A partner in the country dances offering, she stood up, glad to escape a discourse she found herself unable to support.

When they broke up, and Mrs. Herbert's carriage waited to carry Anna home, her breast bow was lost; she was sure she had it on when she went down the dance; that Patty confirmed; some invisible power had certainly secreted it;—the room was searched over and over; no bow could be found, and she was obliged to go home without it; the same ill success attended her inquiries next morning—it was no more heard of.

Anna continued her daily visits to the Castle; their party *quarée* was enlivened by little concerts; Herbert played very well on the flute; Cecilia took her harp, Patty her guittar, and Anna sat down to the organ; they walked, they chatted; every heart seemed in unison, even Cecilia's forgot its gay flirtations, and rested on the peaceful delights of friendship and retirement; but a sad, a fatal reverse awaited our young heroine.

Mrs. Mansel grew daily worse; her declining health filled Anna with grief and anguish; the day was fixed for their departure, and she went for the last time to the castle, where, as it was to be a farewell visit, she was to stay the night; the solemn cloud which overspreads the interview of friends who are on the point of parting, was never

ver more visible than in this evening at Llandore Castle ; restless and uneasy, they all retired early ; and the morning which was to carry Anna from this scene of felicity, broke on her sleepless eyes with little comfort and less hope.

Tired of a bed on which she had unavailingly courted rest, in hopes the air would help to dispel the oppression on her heart, she walked out ; the dear spot she was about to leave contained her warmest affections ; Miss Herbert would be gone, before she returned ; Mrs. Mansel's health in such a melancholy state, what alterations might not happen, for ever to divide her from characters she loved and revered ? Mr. Herbert and Cecilia would undoubtedly soon be united ; God bless them, said she aloud, just as she was met by the incidental bridegroom her fancy had painted.

And who, Miss Mansel, is so happy as to be the object of your early orisons ? had my friend Wilkinson been here, he would have been pleased at your emphatical theme, since such solicitude for one, even of your own sex, must be enviable ?

Is it not natural, Sir, returned she, for me, who have so many obligations to the inhabitants of the place I am so soon to leave, to be fervent in my wishes for their happiness ?

And were they then, Madam, the subjects of your thoughts ? and may I ask, were the males of the family included in the blessing ?

Indeed, Sir, they were, said Anna, with the most engaging earnestness and simplicity.

And God bless you too, most amiable and lovely of women, answered Herbert ; I have much to be forgiven for, Miss Mansel ; but I know so well the sweetness of your disposition, I have no fear, but my heart, if laid open at your feet, would be more the object of your compassion than resentment ; if I have been the unhappy source of un-

easiness to you, believe me it was without design ; the efforts of reason, reflection, and honour, may have been in some few moments since I have known you, too weak to conquer feelings that have received additional strength from concurrent circumstances, or to conceal wishes incompatible with my own peace and yours ; yet, in my lucid intervals, and those I trust are many, my whole soul is interested in your honour and felicity ; adieu, Madam, if my indiscretions revive in your imaginations, remember in the moment when my heart was bursting with its secret woe, I prayed for your happiness, and tore myself away.

Remember ! repeated the agitated Anna. Oh ! that I could learn to forget, following his quick steps with her swimming eyes, as he left her.

It was not possible now to misconstrue his meaning ; hopes, which she had hitherto repelled, filled her heart ; his trembling, his faltering, his hesitation, could have but one source.

And am I then, said she, exultingly, beloved by Charles Herbert ! who can tell, if blessed with birth and fortune, I might not have been his choice ; enviable attractions ! did I ever regret your want before !

But I may admire his virtues, I may respect his principles, nay I may love the guarded purity of his passion, while I am single without injuring myself or him ; and what is there on this side heaven can give an equivalent for even *that* poor gratification ?

This interview gave Anna spirits ; she returned to the house, and after spending the day there, she was fetched home by the rector, who then took leave of the young ladies. Mrs. Herbert having been so good as to take her tea at the parsonage with the worthy Mrs. Mansel, with whom she parted with the sincerest wishes for the re-establishment

blishment of her health, and regret for the occasion of their separation. Herbert did not appear; he had rode out, and returned not till Anna had left the castle.

C H A P. XXIX.

The House of Mourning.

THE following morning Mr. and Mrs. Mansel, with Anna, set out for Swansea.

Neither the salutary sea breezes, nor the briny medicine, were of the least service to Mrs. Mansel, whose disorder increased beyond all human aid; and her weakness, such as rendered it impossible to carry her in a chair; but willing to try every thing, she was conveyed by water to the Bristol Hot Wells.

Here she continued till after Christmas, in vain hopes of receiving benefit from the waters and physicians. Mr. Mansel's distress is not to be conceived.—To gratify him only it was, his beloved wife staid there so long; but at last, finding all would not do, she begged to resign her breath at
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the parsonage ; and so eager was the worthy woman to get there, she supported herself in her long journey much better than could be expected.

She was brought in a litter the last four stages, followed by the tears and prayers of the inhabitants, through the village, to her own house ; where, with an unruffled mind and quiet conscience, she waited the eternal fiat.

During the awful interval that passed between the time when every hope of her recovery had left them to that of her dissolution, the anguish of her husband and young friend may be better conceived than described.

The solemn and hopeless inquiries of the neighbours, the lamentations of the poor, the grief of the servants, were faint epitomes of the severe sorrows of the inconsolable husband, and of the affectionate orphan.

The parsonage, so late the scene of perfect tranquillity, of chearful content, and uninterrupted peace, was now literally a house of mourning.

In this scene of poignant sorrow, although every moment out of the dying saint's apartment, Anna was drowned in tears, while by her bed-side she was the serene companion of the friend she loved ; she was her nurse ; she read to her ; and when the broken-hearted husband could officiate in his holy office, fervently joined in the sacred devotion of a death-bed ; while Mrs. Mansel dosed, with true filial piety did she exert her utmost power to comfort the grieving rector, though her own feelings were unsupportable.

On the 28th of January, after very strong struggles for one who had been gradually weakening so long, it pleased God to take to his peace a woman who had served him all her days ; her resignation and fortitude during her painful and lingering disorder, was the last, and not the least valuable lesson

son left to Anna, in whose arms she expired ; and who, contrary to the modes of the times which authorises depositing the corpse of our best friend in a vacant apartment, continued to sit and sleep in the room until the eighth day ; when, having (led by Mr. Mansel, and followed by the parishioners of Llandore) seen her remains deposited in the chancel of the church, they retired, each to their apartments, unable to meet at that table where now the voice that cheered and instructed was heard no more.

Her last injunctions to Anna were to follow the counsel of Mr. Mansel ; and her last request to her husband, never to forsake or deny parental care to the child of her heart.

Mr. Mansel had a maiden sister who had been sent for by Mrs. Mansel (when at Swansea she saw no hope of her speedy return) to take care of the family, and had, at Anna's request, been continued. After Mrs. Mansel's death, her stay was still necessary ; but if it had not, she would have had no inclination to leave a warm, full house, for her own little cottage, where she lived on a very small income.

Mrs. Jane Mansel was in the fiftieth year of her celibacy, and valued herself on her notability and fine shape ; for few women could vie with her in either ; she was, indeed, saving to a proverb, and small to a fault : she was ill tempered, sandy haired, and fallow complectioned ; she had not yet given up the hopes of matrimony, for which purpose, ever since she had resided at the Parsonage, she had been making a hoard of every thing in kind to tempt, when no other attraction was to be found.

Such a substitute for the saint they had lost, soon occasioned an alteration in the parson's family : the man and maid, who were the happy domestics of the

the best manager and mistress on earth, resigned their places, which were immediately filled by those, who knew nothing more than was necessary in a common farm house, and who, from a similarity of minds and manners, were the favourites of Mrs. Jane.

When Mr. Mansel was present, nothing could exceed the fawning speciousness of this woman's behaviour to Anna; but the moment his back was turned, her never-failing topics were lessons of industry to young people, delivered to her maid, but evidently meant *at* Anna.—She hated to see those who were able, and having nothing of their own, unwilling to work, loitering about as if their whole business in the world was to be maintained at other people's expence.

Those lectures, which had always witnesses, and her own want of spirits, which were sunk to the lowest ebb, soon lessened the consequence of Anna at the Parsonage, and placed her in a situation very little to be envied. She did not like, by informing Mr. Mansel of his sister's conduct, to embroil him in a family dispute, and much less did she choose to submit to the insults of a woman, who, if she had been of a tolerable temper, was so extremely ignorant and low bred, it was impossible to associate with.

Mr. Mansel's grief for his wife was of the kind to last; it vented not itself in words, it subsided not in the overflowings which dropped from his eyes; his soul was the mansion of integrity; *there*, in every sentiment, in every thought, he found renewed the memory of his Maria: nothing of goodness struck his imagination unaccompanied with her idea; the violence of his sorrow, indeed, abated, as he brought himself to consider she had but preceded him in the rich reward of virtue. But when alone, when he could uninterruptedly

ruptedly recal her voice, her action, and her wisdom, he fancied himself yet in her society; he was, therefore, seldom visible but in the discharge of his duties and at meals; nor was it always he accompanied them then; the chearful board, the innocent chat, the comfortable fireside was no more; and Anna so constantly reminded, began to conceive the living a burden on honest pains-taking people, shameful and unnecessary: yet loath to hurt or offend Mr. Mansel, it was with great reluctance, and not till personally and directly affronted by Mrs. Jane, she could raise her spirits sufficiently to propose leaving him.

Mr. Mansel heard her with sorrow and surprise; he entreated her to consider well the step she was taking; questioned her about his family; begged she would modulate it as she pleased. Wilkinson, though he called sometimes, had received his definitive answer; *he* was no longer troublesome, what could then be her motives?

Fully resolved to conceal the cause of her disgust, and too much irritated to remain subject to the ignorant caprice of Mrs. Jane, she said it was necessary for her to lay down some plan for her way of life. Servitude must be her last resource; she heard there were means in the metropolis by which women of good education might earn a decent subsistence, with a tolerable appearance; and another strong motive for her wishing to go, was her desire to learn every particular of her origin, that she might try to get some knowledge of her family.

Mr. Mansel, who knew it was not in his power to provide longer for her than he lived, felt the propriety of her reasons, though he secretly wished she had not been so nice about servitude, as he thought the Edwins might have assisted her: he, therefore, ceased to oppose her intentions, but
took

took every method to make her journey comfortable.

The fifty pounds Lady Edwin sent her remained (notwithstanding all the money Mrs. Mansel had saved was expended, and some debts unavoidably contracted) untouched; that and Mrs. Mansel's clothes he insisted on her taking; every thing belonging to her departed friend was dear to her: but as to the note, all his pleadings could not induce her to take more than twenty pounds.

Still the good man was very loath to part with her; but finding her bent on going, he took her himself to Brecknock, and having obtained the promise from her of returning to him, as her home, parted with tears and regret on both sides; his last words as he put her into the coach being, "Remember you have a home, and I am your father."

CHAP.

C H A P. XXX.

A Journey to London.

ANNA took Bath in her way, and was received by Mrs. Herbert and Patty with the same kindness and friendship she was used to at Llandore. They pressed her to stay; but she was too eager to get to London, to comply with their invitation. She hinted to them her circumstances, and Mrs. Herbert insisted on troubling her with a card to Lady Edwin. Cecilia being with Miss Turbville in Bedfordshire; and Patty told her with great joy, that her Cousin, Hugh, who was expected every day, was to be married as soon as he came, when they should all be in London: they agreed to continue on their correspondence; and after two days stay, Anna again set out on her journey to London.

She was met by Mr. Dalton at the inn, who was apprized of her coming by a letter from Mr. Mansel.

The time which had passed so happily with our heroine, had produced many alterations in the situation of Dalton; the clergyman, to whose humanity he owed his curacy, was dead, and his successor chose to place a relation of his own in the cure. A twelvemonth had passed without any prospect of again meeting an employ that would feed

feed his family. Unsuccessful in all his applications for a church, he, at last, sought favour among his old friends the Methodists ; from one of those people he got a recommendation to a gentleman who headed and patronized that sect, and was indeed a good Samaritan.

In possession of a large and clear estate, as well as merchandizing to all parts of the globe, Mr. Thornhill had the power of putting into practice the lovely attributes of charity and benevolence, as literally laid down by his Divine Preceptor ; to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to pour balm into the wounds of enemies as well as friends, was the business of his life ; if, in the extensive line of his charities, he knew a preference, it was to the strict professors of his own religion ; a partiality the more excuseable as none of the sons or daughters of Affliction were turned unrelieved from his gates. This gentleman, in the fervency of his zeal, had lately built a small chapel in a village about six miles from the metropolis ; the number of artificers employed in its neighbourhood was a temptation to the good man to endow it, and place there a preacher who would be attentive and industrious in his holy calling.

Dalton's application for charity, as a preacher with a numerous offspring out of bread, and destitute of means for their support, fortunately came at this period to the hands of Mr. Thornhill, whose compassion for the individual was increased by his general good will to his fellow creatures, on whose account the chapel was erected ; he relieved the necessities, painted in a very strong light by Dalton, and placed him in the new meeting, with house rent and fifty pounds a year for life. In this situation he was when he received the unwelcome news of Anna's return to his protection ; however, by his wife's advice, he

went

went to the inn where the coach stopt, in order to conduct her to his house.

Mrs. Dalton received her very kindly, and that kindness was much increased by the present of a brown satin night gown of Mrs. Mansel's for herself, and all the remains of the finery brought from Melmoth Lodge, as well as the clothes she had out-grown since, for her children, who were disposed of different ways, except the eldest daughter, she had served out her apprenticeship to the mantua-maker, and now worked at her business, paying her father for her board and lodging.

The next morning Dalton told Anna, with very little ceremony, it was time for her to think of some mode of living, without being a hanger on from one to the other. This was her own sentiments; but she could have dispensed with his coarse opinion on the matter, delivered without feeling or judgment. The contrast between this address and those she had lately been used to, struck her so forcibly, she could not immediately answer;—which silence being interpreted by him into a design of fixing herself on him, he wisely resolved to let her know it was what she must not expect in time; and was on the point of being still less attentive to the laws of hospitality, when a question from her brought the blood into the cheek of both him and his wife, and that was, to know the particulars of his first meeting her; when, and where it was; and lastly, what the things that were brought by the deceased to the lodgings consisted of, and what was become of them?

After a little pause, which if our heroine had the least knowledge of guilt herself, must have given birth to suspicions not very favourable to her reverend friend, he told her where she was brought

brought by her father, but that not only the woman was moved, but the very house (which was true) was pulled down, and another built on the spot; that the things consisted of a few wearables, which had been sold without reserve to defray the expences of the funeral; and that he had, by advertisement, and every inquiry in his power, endeavoured to find out to whom she belonged, without success; that by the sunburnt complexion of both the man and woman, he concluded they came from abroad.

This account entirely banished every hope of learning any thing of her origin. It was very unlikely she, who was so entirely ignorant of the world, should succeed better in her researches than Mr. Dalton, who was so much interested in finding some one to take off his hands, a child, who had no claims on him but those of charity.

Her next thought was to deliver Mrs. Herbert's card to Lady Edwin, in hopes, by that Lady's patronage, she might be able to fix on some means for her future subsistence.

She accordingly went in the morning stage, and was set down in Whitechapel. The streets were very dirty; wholly unacquainted with London and its customs, she had no idea of taking a coach; through the wet, therefore, she walked, inquiring at every turning the way to Grosvenor Square, which she reached in three hours, having sometimes received right directions, and oftener wrong, to the great entertainment of the witty crackers of so pleasant a joke.

Tired and splashed, at length she arrived at the door of Lady Edwin, which two or three chairs and a dozen powdered fops in livery surrounded: these she had to push her way through.

The impudence, the vices, and the follies of their employers, are, in general, so exactly copied

ed by those party-coloured gentlemen, that when I have said those in waiting belonging to some of the first and most dissipated families in the kingdom, I need not add, the sight of a modest young woman had in it too much novelty to pass unnoticed or uninvited. With great difficulty (as they ran all their undaunted faces under her hat) she reached the porter, who, with a settled grin and witty sneer at his companions, stood waiting to receive her.

To her modest question of, Is Lady Edwin at home? she was answered with a gruff, No, and a supercilious stare; and then unfortunately her spotted clothes, attracting the notice of the too-well-kept, idle wretches round her, she was saluted with a loud laugh.

Astonished at such brutal rudeness, such wanton, unprovoked insolence, and terrified with the apprehensions of what insults might farther be offered her, she was hastily going from the door, when a footman belonging to the house, struck with her beauty, recollecting Lady Edwin's woman had just discharged her maid, and promising himself (for he was a person of great gallantry) his present condescension might be rewarded with future favour, bid her come in, and civilly asked her business. Mrs. Herbert's name electrified the whole crew; those belonging to the visitors' chairs slunk off, and the surly porter taking the card, rung for Lady Edwin's own man, who begged her to walk in; at the same time opening the door of an elegant and spacious parlour, said his lady had company but he would deliver the card the moment they went.—Here to her great comfort she found a large fire, at which she dried her feet, and had time to set her clothes in a little better order, as it was full two hours before she was admitted to Lady Edwin.

The

The cordiality of her reception made ample amends for the mortifications she had received at the door : the lady embraced her with great affection, condoled with her on her sable dress, and expressed herself much pleased at Mrs. Herbert's sending her to Grosvenor-square.

Struck with a kindness she did not expect, our heroine burst into tears.

Lady Edwin's goodness increased with this mark of sensibility ; she had a real regard for her, and when she heard from Mrs. Herbert, the declining state of Mrs. Mansel's health, had thought the having such a young person about her in quality of a companion would be both convenient and agreeable :—Miss Edwin troubled her with very little of her company ; she grew corpulent and indolent ; public places she was weary of, and going out much fatigued without amusing her. Lady Edwin liked cards, and her routs were crowded by the first people ; but there were many hours which an elegant sensible young woman would very acceptably fill ; she, therefore, directly proposed to Anna living with her on the footing of a companion, and said, she would compliment her with fifty pounds a year for clothes.

It cannot be doubted but this offer was gratefully accepted ; and so desirous was the lady of having her immediately there, an early dinner was ordered, and the coach carried her to Dalton's, with directions to wait for and bring her back.

When Dalton saw so elegant a carriage stop at his door and Anna alight from it, he could scarce believe his eyes ; with undissembled joy he heard how fortunate she had been ; he congratulated her on it ; and, never out of his way, begged, if an opportunity offered, she would put in a word for him

him to Lady Edwin, whose poor countryman he was.

Her baggage not having been unpacked was soon ready, and once more Mr. Dalton had the pleasure of seeing himself freed from his care of Anna: she returned to Grosvenor-square early in the evening:—Lady Edwin, very much pleased with the gratitude and alacrity she had shewn, ordered a piece of black silk in addition to what she already had, and gave directions to her own tradespeople to equip her in a fashionable stile, as her night was to be the third after.

In the intermediate space she did not fail acquainting Mr. Mansel with her situation, or thanking Mrs. Herbert for the friendly recommendation which had procured her the honour of Lady Edwin's favour; a hair-dresser having cut and tortured her charming ringlets into likenesses of nothing human, and dressed in fashionable mourning, Anna followed Lady Edwin into her drawing-room.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXI.

High Life.

LADY Edwin's doors opened at nine, but it was near eleven before the card tables were all filled. This scene was perfectly novel to our heroine, and excited no less her curiosity than wonder; she, who had hitherto looked on visiting as a method of keeping up the connection of families and friends, could not conceive the pleasure of entertaining such a number of people by a single courtesy to each person as they entered, and an arrangement of the tables, any more than she could reconcile it to her ideas of civility for people to leave the house without even that little ceremony or bestowing a look at the lady of the mansion; the constant succession of feathered ladies and painted beaus, who just glided round the rooms and retired, particularly struck her, as a very unmeaning mode of passing their time.

She was however, drawn out of one surprise and thrown into another, by a most polite and flattering address from a male figure, who begged Lady Edwin to introduce him to the lovely stranger; her ladyship's ready compliance with this request, convinced Anna it was a person of consequence who made it, which his ridiculous appearance rendered at first rather doubtful, to one who knew not that
nothing

nothing in that stile was beneath our modern nobles.

He was a tall, elderly personage, whose satin waistcoat and breeches were out-pinked by the rouge on his cheeks, and that beautifully contrasted by the white daubings on the other parts of his haggard face; he had a wide mouth, which the art of his dentist contrived to fill with a double row of false teeth; he was fond of his height, and to keep up the appearance of youth and vigour he wore stays; he was of such an amorous constitution, that the sight of beauty set him in a flame, and the shew and variety of his mistresses could only be equalled by his stud of horses; his hair was curiously frizled out at the sides, in close imitation of the court Adonis; he wore a blue ribband, and was vastly addicted to falling in love.

He approached Anna with a ghastly stare, which he mistook for a languishing ogle, and which would certainly have provoked her risible faculties, had not Lady Edwin announced him the Duke of ———. To laugh at a Duke would have been shocking; to respect him impossible; she was therefore an angel, a goddess, and every thing divine without raising her vanity; and his Grace wounded, miserable, and dying, without exciting her pity; she had too much good sense to feel any thing but contempt, for a man, whose ambition it was to take the lead in folly and dissipation, when not only his age but constitution called for reformation and warm flannels, and was not long able to conceal her disgust; the ducal title filled her with awe, but the poor animal who bore it soon deprived himself of respect; she involuntarily turned her back on his eloquence, his dignity, and his admiration.

The marked manner in which his Grace singled out our heroine, called forth the glasses of the

beaus, who, dear creatures ! to a man are all purblind ; and the ladies, not to be behind them in defects, were so good as to lisp out their inquiries of " Who is she, and what is she ?"

These general observations made her truly ridiculous ; she actually was out of countenance ; her modest eyes withdrew from the gaze of curiosity ; a piece of ill-breeding any modern belle would try to blush at. But poor awkward thing she soon ceased to be an interesting object, except to a few dissipated married men ; for it being somehow whispered, that she was the daughter of a Welch parson, whom Lady Edwin had taken as a companion to Miss Edwin, the ladies were easy and the beaus satisfied.

This, far from mortifying Anna, left her to enjoy her own observation, which brought home things in others, less desirable than poverty and dependence. The insipid evening passed, and the rooms cleared at one o'clock ; Sir William, Lady Edwin, and Anna, then sat down to supper, and retired about two.

One evening gave Miss Mansel a lesson for all the company they received, or the visits they paid ; and very soon she was so well acquainted with the etiquette on these occasions, as to take all fatigue off Lady Edwin, who sat to cards in the first party, leaving the ceremonial part to her.

When she was entirely settled, and her thoughts at liberty, nothing to wish for but the continuance of Lady Edwin's favour, the past scenes would often return to her imagination, and was it possible, was she indeed, settled under the roof of Lady Edwin, could it be, and should she again see and converse with Charles Herbert ? Yes, she remembered his parting words ; but, alas ! what end could it answer. Better, far better would it be to forget he existed ; was he not engaged, and that

to

to her friend, the daughter of her benefactress; was it not unjust and ungrateful in her to wish to supplant a person, who had so many claims to a contrary conduct? And, indeed, if that was not the case, if he was free, was it likely he would think of her, would his family pride stoop to a girl in her dependent state, one who had not the benefits common to the refuse of society, who knew not a creature of her blood, and who was totally destitute of the means of subsistence but from the charity of strangers? Certainly no; well, then, she would resolve to think no more of him:—but

“ Thought repelled, repenting, rallies,
“ And doubles every woe.”

A letter from Mr. Mansel, in which the good man favoured her with advice and congratulations on her present situation, contributed not a little to the fixing in her mind an idea that, to say the truth, never left it. He warned her against the deceptions of her own heart, hinted at the partiality she was suspected of for young Herbert; at the same time he represented the impossibility of its being attended with success; said the dependent situation of that young gentleman was such, that his ruin must be the consequence of a suspicion of that kind in the family, as he knew it was their settled intention to unite him to his cousin: begged, therefore, she would guard her peace (her honour he knew to be secured by her own principles), presented Wilkinson's best wishes, and invited her home whenever she pleased.

Anna shed tears over this letter, and called herself severely to task for her conduct, some part or other of which must have given rise to her friend's conjecture; and if him, why not others? Alarmed

at this conclusion, she resolved to be more guarded in future.

Lady Edwin grew more pleased with her companion the longer she knew her ; and Sir William was as partial as generous, ever buying some little trinket to present her with, and her time passed if not happily at least agreeably.

C H A P. XXXII.

The Arrival of a Stranger.

A Month after Anna's removing to Grosvenor-square, Mr. Hugh Edwin returned from abroad.

This event filled the house with joy ; he was the idol of his family, and the heir of their noble fortunes ; had been four years making the grand Tour ; no expence or pains had been spared to render him the most accomplished man of the age, and his fine natural parts gave flattering hopes of the figure his rank and fortune entitled him to cut in the world.

But

But the high opinion entertained of his abilities by his fond parents, and their blind indulgence to the foibles of his infancy, had ruined the one, and converted the other into mature vice.

He was handsome and elegant in his person ; and by his acquaintance with the world, had acquired an easy and polite address.

His good understanding was embellished with a pleasing delivery, and when he chose to exert himself, he was master of great elocution, which, added to a perfect knowledge of the laws of his country, promised to his father, who doted on him, the utmost that fame and ambition could bestow.

But the unrestrained liberty of action, and power of purse, which he received from the affection of his parents, involved him in almost every vice in the composition of human nature, and young as he was in years, returned to his country a veteran in iniquity—He had seduced, under a solemn promise of marriage, before he went on his travels, a young widow of fortune and family, whose love for him so far exceeded all other considerations, that though she found herself ruined and deceived, she accompanied him abroad, when notwithstanding his great allowance from his father, he contrived to spend her whole fortune.

She had bred by him, but as it is said, there is no friendship among the wicked, neither can there be a lasting esteem or real happiness in a vicious connection.

The lover was inconstant, the lady jealous, and by time of their return to England, they, who had flattered themselves they should be blest for life, were become mutual plagues to each other : the unhappy woman, indeed, still doted on her

feducer; but passion founded on mere sensual pleasure, is sure to evaporate in disgust.

Edwin, certain of his father's generosity, made him immediately acquainted with his situation: he was not mistaken; Sir William Edwin had the most guileless of human hearts; when the young prodigal protested his sorrow for his past indiscretions, and promised amendment, the fond father believed him, and took on himself the care of providing for the lady, which he generously did, and that in a manner that rendered her acceptance of five hundred a year, rather a favour conferred on, than received from him.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Filial Piety in fashionable Life.

EDWIN, now free from his companion, was at large ; intrigue was his hobby horse, and mischief his pleasure.

The lovely Anna, in full bloom of beauty and innocence, was an object too desirable to be passed over ; his mother's protection had nothing in it sacred enough to preserve her from his attempts, nor his promise to his father considered from the moment he had obtained his end ; he knew Miss Turbville was the destined partner of his hand, but that, he never designed should shackle his inclinations ; the more he saw of Anna, the more he was enamoured with her ; and so rapidly was her influence increasing, that it was with difficulty he could conceal his raptures, even in the presence of his father and mother—Whenever he caught her alone, which he watched eagerly for, he pleaded his passion with all the violence natural to his temper.

How easy is it to resist temptation our inclinations revolt at ! Anna could paint to Edwin his undutiful behaviour to the best of parents ; she could assure him, if there was no other objection, her obligations to Lady Cecilia would sufficiently steel her heart against addresses she knew they

would disapprove—Abandoned as this young man was, the propriety of conduct and modest dignity of Anna's deportment was such, that he had hinted at nothing short of an honourable passion, although he was sensible it was neither in his power or inclination to perform such engagements, if he could prevail on her to accept them.

But of that there was not the least danger ; for though no more of his character had reached the ears of Anna than what Lady Edwin thought proper to disclose, she was armed with the argument I have hinted at ; and had there been no other, I am persuaded there needed none ; but in truth there was, and had young Edwin offered her a diadem, her heart was so devoted to the humbler graces of his cousin, she would have rejected him—She lived but for Herbert, at the same time that she had not the most distant hope of ever being happy in the object of her choice ; on the contrary, while her imagination was perpetually bringing back the last scene at Llandore, she flattered herself she could see him united to Miss Edwin, without any other emotion than what the most disinterested friendship would warrant, reserving only to herself the pleasing idea, that while she was single, (which she predetermined should be as long as she lived) she might continue the secret preference her heart now gave him, without injury either to his honour or her own ; and having made up her mind in this dangerous manner, she no longer sought to repress the approbation which, in spite of herself, would accompany the memory of every action.

Her heart was continually forming comparisons between him and the young men that visited at Sir William's ; if her sentiments happened to be those of any other person, she was sure Charles

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Herbert's expressions would have given grace to them ; if she was disgusted, her first thoughts were, good heavens, how different is Herbert !

Thus, then, nourishing the secret bias of her soul, she lived at Lady Edwin's without any disquiet, but what the young man's assiduities gave her, some weeks ; for Miss Edwin was to stay in Bedfordshire till the family went to fetch her, that a convenient opportunity for Mr. Edwin's falling in love with Miss Turbville might not be wanting.

Mr. Edwin found himself in no hurry to forward this marriage ; his heart became really devoted to Anna, the more seriously, that notwithstanding the disadvantages of her situation, two gentlemen of fortune, one of them of rank, had made their offers of marriage ; one a Baronet, of good estate and reputable family, turned of forty ; the other, a Mr. Mordant, a young man of unexceptionable morals, and agreeable person, son to an opulent West-India planter, who Sir William (being acquainted with his connections) was very kind to ; and he was admitted into the family on the footing of a relation ; his father left him to his own choice of a wife, that must accompany him to Jamaica, and his heart paid homage to the charms of our heroine.

The indifference with which she received those proposals, and the explicit manner in which she refused them, appeared no less extraordinary to Sir William and his lady, than flattering to the vanity of their son ; he had been so used to success among the women, he could not doubt but his good fortune would still continue ; and the latent partiality for his dear self convinced him those rejections of Anna were founded on her attachment to him.

He dreaded nipping in the bud the bright hope on which so much depended ; the least hint of his nuptials, as consented to by himself, would he foresaw, ruin him with her. On Sir William settling his affairs with Mrs. Mitford, he promised to comply with all his wishes in regard [to his establishment in life : and indeed a situation, independent of control, was too desirable a matter to be declined by a young man who wished for nothing more.

Yet the lovely Anna to be given up, was too great a sacrifice even for that, and one excuse followed another to protract time. Mr. Herbert's family were invited to accompany them to Bedfordshire, but Edwin had privately wrote to Charles to put off the journey from week to week, till Sir William declaring he would go without them, that would no longer answer his purpose, the day before their arrival, he thought proper to fall sick, a private emetic gave the appearance of a violent attack that alarmed his parents, who wished to call in every medical assistance ; but their son had a particular confidence in one only, and he, though not a person who attended the family, was employed, and his reports of the progress of the disorder just such as suited the patient's inclination.

It was in vain Lady Cecilia intreated he would have more advice ; it teased him to be opposed, and increased his fever ; he was sure he was perfectly safe in the hands of Mr. Depuis, and would see nobody else.

Anna, susceptible to all the feelings of humanity, and who loved and honoured Lady Edwin, caught from her the habit of solicitude for her son ; and in hopes to calm the fears of the fond mother, was constantly inquiring after the health of her heir.

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Of this circumstance Mr. Edwin's valet took care to inform his master, whose joy, at each proof of attention from her, was hardly to be kept within bounds ; to her inquiries, he was always better ; to others worse ; so that Lady Cecilia, finding herself comforted by Anna's report, was so exceedingly pleased when she made it, that she could not but be encouraged to persevere in a conduct so acceptable to her patroness.

In this situation the Herberts found them. Young Edwin and Charles had spent their youth, and taken the first rudiments of learning together, having never been separated till Mr. Edwin went on his tour ; so that, unlike as the cousins were in their principles, they were much attached to each other.

Herbert was hardly seated by the bed of his friend (for he pretended he could not sit up) before he disclosed his sham sickness, alledging his repugnance to the state of marriage at all times, but more particularly now, when he said he was expected to fall in love with one woman while he was heart and soul devoted to another, as the reason of putting this deception on his family ; he then proceeded to inform him of the method he had taken, having actually made himself ill by affecting it.

This occasioned a good deal of mirth between the two friends, in the midst of which, his trusty valet came to inform him that Miss Mansel had asked after his honour's health twice in the last half hour.

"Charming, delightful, kind Anna !" exclaimed Edwin.

The mirth which had exhilarated the countenance of Herbert in an instant fled.

"What,"

"What," said he, scarce daring to breathe,
 "who? Miss Mansel did you say? Anna, is it
 "her?"

"Ah, you know her, then?" replied the
 other—"Yes: who but she *could* have taken
 "such entire possession of my soul?"

"I thought," said Herbert, "she was mar-
 "ried?"

"Heaven forbid," answered Edwin, "that
 "any human being should dare to have a hope of
 "the kind; no, she refused William Mordant
 "and Sir Charles Stanly; refused them for me,
 "Charles; I have stole into her little heart;
 "she must be mine."

"What, then, will you give up Miss Turb-
 "ville?"

"Not so, neither."

"How will you then, manage with Anna?
 "you cannot think—"

"*Think*, I *know* she loves me, Charles, and by
 "heavens I adore her; but I believe we shall
 "neither of us *think* it necessary to have recourse
 "to the dull beaten road of matrimony."

"Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
 "Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies,"

Mr. Edwin in the excess of his rapturous ideas,
 run on for some time in this strain, and might
 have, uninterrupted, repeated all the poetry and
 common place sayings the worn out subject of se-
 duction could furnish him.

Herbert was too much absorbed in his own ideas
 (which were not of the pleasanter kind) to attend
 to him; he was not, till this moment, sensible of
 the strength of his attachment to our heroine; 'tis
 true he thought her engaged, and by this time
 married to the person of her choice; that, and
 that

that only, had prevented his attempting to render successful the first serious passion he ever felt ; but now that he found she was not only single, but in love with a man that meditated her ruin, his thoughts were in tumults.

Should he not endeavour to save the sweetness and purity so captivating ?

Were these elegant manners, those charms of person, given her, then, in such profusion, to be the prey of vice ? But how could she be saved ? would a woman who could attach herself to a known libertine, thank him for an interference (rather impertinent than according to such ideas) friendly, and if so, what end would it answer, except involving their family in a quarrel, which would distress his mother, and even bring the charge of ingratitude on himself ? As he was conscious of many obligations to his uncle, he, therefore, for a moment, gave it up, and retired, under pretence of fatigue, pleading that as an excuse for not waiting Sir William's return from the house ; but he could not leave Grosvenor-square without making his bow to Lady Cecilia ; he accordingly was announced.

C H A P. XXXIV.

The Pique.

THE crimsoned cheek of Anna would have told a very contradictory tale to that he had just now heard, had Herbert observed her; but a sensation resembling inward pride and resentment, added to the resolution he had just formed, and being prepared to see her, prevented that observation, or any other. After paying his respects to Lady Cecilia, he bowed with the cold indifference of a common acquaintance and no more.

Good heaven! what at that cruel moment were the feelings of Anna; her heart had fondly anticipated the pleasure of this meeting to Charles and herself; she could not, from all his behaviour, help indulging hopes of being dear to him; their parting scene was ever present in her mind, the plaintive sound of his voice at that period still vibrated on her ear; and after all, was it thus they met! the pointed neglect, the cutting indifference, struck her with grief and consternation.

Too much confused to ask after his mother and sister, and scarce able to support herself, she took the opportunity of Lady Edwin's family inquiries to retire to her chamber, where a flood of tears relieved her swelling heart:—Ah, cried she! bitterly weeping, it was not to Mr. Mansel only, I dis-

discovered the imprudent, the presumptuous thoughts, my own folly too, too much encouraged; Herbert has perceived it, and despises me; he sees the forward girl is not to be trusted with the appearance of friendship; his looks, his manner, spoke a contempt I could not otherwise have excited.

But perhaps, continued the afflicted girl, the change in my situation has had this effect; and could Herbert, could he be the first whose behaviour should remind her of her dependence on his family; was that the expansion of his heart, the noble disposition for which she had so admired him: cruel Herbert, unhappy Anna; she had created an idol in her own imagination, of manly beauty and goodness, her every thought had learnt to worship; he had barbarously torn away its amiable visage, and substituted in its place the most frightful deformity; but she would think of him no more, or if she did, it should be with the contempt such caprice deserved; she would shew him, that true pride of conscious worth and integrity was of no family, that it might exist, undignified by blood, unadorned by the gifts of fortune: suppose he had suspected her imprudent affection, sure it could be no difficult matter to change that affection into scorn for one who could insult a woman because he might; for such a change of behaviour, without the least cause on her side, amounted, in her present imagination, to insult.

The value of Lady Cecilia's kindness to her now lessened; she condemned herself for not taking Dalton's advice, and fixing on a trade, whereby she might subsist, with some little claim to independence: she had lost all consequence with herself, from the moment she supposed she was of none to Herbert; her heart sickened at the prospect before her; she had wrote to Miss Edwin, in her former

mer stile, but had received no answer ; the sweet intercourse, the union of minds, that was to last their lives, was already evaporated, and had no more place in that lady's thoughts than if it never had existed.

From the sentimental novelist of seventeen, Miss Edwin was transformed into the gay coquette of twenty ; the hero of her first romance only, maintained his ground in the variety of her ideas ; Charles Herbert was amiable, when over-run with notions of love ; she was ignorant of almost every thing else ; and now that her fortune was a bait to every coxcomb she became acquainted with, and her passion for admiration gave encouragement to every fool to address her, still her cousin was beyond compare preferable to any she saw, and her pride not a little hurt to find his attachment to her by no means what she had flattered herself.

Miss Turbville, her now bosom friend, was the counterpart of Cecilia ; they were educated together, and the formation of their minds left to women who (interested only by the price they received, and ignorant of the real accomplishments that render a young woman of fashion valuable, to her own connections in particular, and society in general) were gratified in making them acquainted with the superficial knowledge themselves possessed.

Born to splendid fortunes, and never contradicted in their lives, it is little to be wondered their tempers were unamiable as their manners ; they both set out determined to be the heroines of sentimental passions ; but fine cloaths, fine company, and fine jewels, with the very fine speeches of a few as fine beaux, totally overthrew the first soft system, and introduced an inordinate love of dress, pleasure

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sure and admiration ; sensibility was banished, and the finer feelings were no more.

So that there was no consolation to be derived from the memory of Miss Edwin's friendship.

Mrs. Herbert wanted resolution, and Patty, the amiable Patty, power to be of service to her ; Dalton had plainly hinted she must not think of living there, Lady Edwin's protection was therefore her only resource, and there she must constantly see the man of all others she wished to avoid ; the advance of spring promised no alteration, as there was yet no talk of going to Dennis Place.

Lady Edwin at this moment sent for her, to inform her of two things ; one, highly agreeable to her, was, that Mr. Herbert, his lady and daughter, were arrived at their lodgings in Bond-street, whither she desired her to go and welcome them ; and the other, that Cecilia, and Mr. Stanley's family would be in town the following week.

Anna eagerly flew to execute the commands of her patroness : Patty wept with joy, and Mrs. Herbert expressed as much pleasure as the gloom on her countenance would permit ; they had not yet seen Charles, who came from Oxford to join them ; they returned with her to Grosvenor-square, and staid the evening.

Mr. Stanley, guardian to Miss Turbville, a most worthy character, was rejoiced at the approach of the time that was to free him from the care of a flighty girl, whose large fortune rendered her so tempting an object ; and therefore, since the mountain would not go to Mahomet, Mahomet, he said, must go to the mountain ; in a word, he removed with his family to a ready-furnished house in Burlington-Sreet.

It signified nothing now to be sick ; all evasions were at an end ; Edwin's honour had been given
to

to his father, to marry, when he so nobly provided for Mrs. Mitford: no excuse would be admitted by his parents, and his ideas were so full of the charms of independence, that when he could get the lovely Anna out of his head, he was rather desirous of being what he called settled.

But that was neither often nor of long duration, Anna returned with double force and with irresistible power, banishing every agreeable consequence of his marriage with another; he knelt, swore, and vowed in vain; she urged him to obedience to his parents; to remember his family, fortune, and connections; and at length, declared her affections were engaged—Distracted at this idea, he resolved to force a compliance from her; he now found it in vain to court; disappointed pride and vanity were goads to a passion that wanted none.

In the time of his separation from Herbert, dissipation and vicious company had not done more towards corrupting his mind, than good sense and moral companions had done to improve Herbert—the former felt he respected his cousin more, but loved him less for his superiority: notwithstanding his rational and polite behaviour on all occasions, he had found him rather shy of the confidence he was disposed to place in him respecting his designs on Anna; and when he perceived he had imposed on himself, in his conclusions of her partiality, he was prevented both by that and his own pride from revealing to him his disappointments or future intentions.

Herbert, on his part, now in the constant company of our heroine, found reason and reflection too weak to guard him from her fascinating charms, yet, piqued at his first behaviour, her whole deportment towards him was so reserved, so cool, and so distant, that he doubted not Edwin was a favoured lover; he regretted a thousand times he had

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had not tried to make an interest in her heart at Llandore—he recollected a variety of circumstances which might have convinced him, she disliked Wilkinson, but it was now too late to avail himself of those observations ; for, besides that it would be dishonourable to his cousin, his own delicacy could not bear to think of being second to such a libertine, even in the heart of Anna ; yet he wished, fervently wished, she might escape the meditated ruin.

Those conflicts in his mind so affected him, that it injured his health, and air was ordered: Mrs. Herbert would gladly have accompanied her doting piece, but Lady Edwin wished her to stay in town, and advised lodgings near, from whence he might ride occasionally, or they visit him ; but he chose to return to Oxford, as soon (after he had paid his respects to Miss Edwin and the intended bride) as he could.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXV.

First Impressions.

MR. Stanley's family arrived in town the beginning of May ; Mr. Edwin found his intended bride just the reverse of what his heart approved in Anna ; she was, indeed, tolerable handsome, but vain, conceited, proud, and witty ; had much small talk, loud laugh, and large white teeth, her cheeks, as she was very fair, shewed the rouge at the first glance, and her auburn brows were robbed of their beauty by a black pencil ; her hair plastered with pomatum and brown powder, formed a strong contrast to the clean chestnut locks of Anna ; in short, if instead of captivating, she had laid a regular plan to disgust, she would certainly have succeeded.

But Mr. Edwin was too much a man of the world to suffer his sentiments to escape him inadvertently ; it was his business to fall in love ; and as very few men exceeded him in natural or acquired understanding, to which was added, a graceful, handsome, person, he was so fortunate as to render himself as pleasing to the lady as he affected to be with her.

Cecilia

Cecilia was in the mean time playing off all her airs and graces, at her inanimate cousin, and vexed to death her pains were attended with so little success ; her anger increased by observations not less galling to her pride than alarming to her jealousy.

Charles (pre-determined to be a close observer of Anna at the first interview of the intended bride and bridegroom) had no eyes or ears for any one else ; he saw with extreme satisfaction the placid serenity of her countenance kept its unruffled, peaceful appearance ; looks of curiosity were the only ones she directed towards them ; her face was the faithful index of her mind ; in her fine clear skin every interesting change in her thoughts might be read, and the loveliest pair of eyes in the universe had not yet learnt any lessons but those of nature.

Cecilia saw and felt her superiority ; felt it, accompanied with scorn and envy—What whim could possibly induce Lady Edwin to keep such a thing about her !

She had been accustomed to watch the eyes of the men ; it was not long before the stolen glances of her brother made another discovery, which she was resolved should be turned to use.

When they returned to Grosvenor-square, Miss Edwin went with them, having sent her woman and baggage before ; she pleaded a head ach as an excuse for directly retiring, leaving Lady Edwin surprised, and Anna piqued, at the coolness of her behaviour ; however, as neither thought it necessary to speak their sentiments to each other, no observation was made.

Next morning brought Mr. Herbert and Mr. Mordant to Lady Edwin's breakfast table, which was at too early an hour for Cecilia ; Charles came

to take leave of the family, and Mordant once more to press his suit with Anna; his intimacy in the Edwin family gave him but too many opportunities of witnessing the unexceptionable mind, as well as lovely person, of our heroine.

He brought from the gentleman who had the charge of him from his father a *carte blanche*; the time of his stay in England was very near elapsed, and he, for the last time, came to try his fate with the woman he loved. His interest was warmly espoused by Sir William and Lady Edwin; and finding Herbert was so nearly related to the family, he intreated his influence also. Anna had before said all that a determined mind could say, and the presence of Herbert was very unlikely to give a turn to her sentiments.

The reluctance with which Mordant resigned his last hope, engaged them till two o'clock; when, dressed with the utmost attention, in an elegant morning dishabille, in swam Cecilia, and brushing her eyes over Anna, who respectfully rose at her entrance, bowed to the company, and sat down with a mixture of haughtiness and contempt in her looks. Mordant directly applied to her for her interest with her lovely friend—she was surprised, could not divine who he meant—who could he mean but the charming Miss Mansel—she had no influence.

Anna begged he would spare her as well as the company; she assured him of her grateful remembrance of the honour he did her, which she acknowledged she thought her misfortune she could not, consistent with her own notions of integrity, accept; her resolutions were unalterable. Believe me, Sir, continued she, with an amiable frankness in her manner, and a modest earnestness in her countenance, if I could have returned the affections of so worthy a man, it would have been

been my pride to do it generously ; you are so deserving, Mr. Mordant, I am sure you will meet a heart more valuable than mine, that will require no interfering friends to do justice to your merit. God preserve you, Sir, said she, making him a graceful courtesy, and immediately left the room. Mordant then with a tender regret which affected both Sir William and Lady Edwin, took his leave. Miss Edwin shrugged her shoulders ;—if a capital merchant would not do, she wondered what would !

Mr. Herbert now rose to be gone ; it was in vain Miss Edwin entreated his stay a few days—she wanted a beau—could not possibly do without him—nay, he should stay. He declined all her invitations, took his leave, and went from thence to Mr. Edwin's apartment.

“ Well Charles, and what say you to my divinity ? How do you like her ? ” cried Edwin the moment he entered.

“ I think her a fine woman, and hope you will be happy.”

“ Till death do us part, Charles,—do not forget that.”

“ But what,” said Herbert, “ do you think of her yourself ? for that's the grand question.”

“ Indeed, is it ! But as it is a question which, if answered sincerely, will produce a devilish rude one, it had better not be asked. But come, Charles, as you say she is a fine woman, and all that, if you will take her off my hands, you will oblige me very much.”

Charles expressing no great *gout* to the offered kindness, Edwin inveighed with great bitterness against the folly and insipidity of both Miss Turbville and his sister ; swearing, that if it were not for one sweet hope, he would set off and leave them

them to commit matrimony with any one but himself.

“ Ah! what a difference, said he, between them and the angelic Mansel. Did you observe her absolute loveliness, how, robed in her excellence, she looked an emblem of sweetness, innocence, and beauty? Upon my soul as I sat (stunned with the tittering nonsense of my intended wife) at the other end of the room, when her coral lips opened to deliver, with grace and ease, the sentiments of wisdom and propriety, the perfume of her breath seemed, to my adoring imagination, from that distance to reach my soul. But come, Herbert, you set off to-morrow; we will dine at a tavern to-day; where we will toast the angel in half pints until nothing of love but the pleasure shall have power to disturb us.”

“ Well,” answered Herbert with a faint smile, “ you talk it bravely; but you forget Miss Turbville is to dine here.” “ I leave her looking-glasses enow, and I will swear you debauched me,” replied Edwin, “ so *allons*,” taking hold of his arm.

We left Miss Edwin with her father and mother; the former, as I have said, was dotingly fond of both his children: Lady Edwin’s love for her daughter was greatly lessened by her behaviour, which was neglectful and often rude. She directly began to wonder how her mother could think of taking such a girl as Anna about her; she was sure great inconvenience would arise from such a ridiculous piece of charity. Lady Edwin was astonished at the little ceremony her daughter used in speaking to her, and peremptorily bidding her attend to her own concerns, immediately left the room.

Cecilia,

Cecilia, whose feelings, such as they were, had been too much for her, before Herbert's departure, now cried for mere spite. Her father tenderly inquiring into the cause of her affliction, was told she detested Anna; that she was a proud, insolent creature, who had the assurance, she was sure, to aim at ensnaring her brother.

Partial and indulgent as was Sir William to his children, he could not give way to so uncharitable an insinuation, but took the absent, unoffending Anna's part with so much warmth, that his daughter flung from him into her own room, where, throwing herself on a sofa, she began to vent her anger on her woman, who, she declared, had purposely disfigured her head that morning, because she knew it was her desire to look tolerable.

The woman, in broken English, attempted to vindicate herself, and not without some passion, which irritated her mistress to that degree, that she actually scolded; and her voice sounding all over the house, Anna ran towards her apartment, as did Mr. Edwin and Charles.

They found Cecilia, her eyes swollen with crying, her face distorted with anger, and her lips white and quivering in a perfect frenzy, and her woman, a foreigner, talking quite as fast in her turn. Edwin burst into laughter at this scene, which he told his sister wanted but a Hogarth to render it immortal, sneeringly asked her if she entertained often in this way? and immediately turned on his heel. But Herbert and Anna, actuated both by the same spirit of kindness, attempted to sooth the fair vixen; their endeavours were not successful; she rudely bid them leave her apartment. The truth is, Anna was so much alarmed at what she heard and saw, and Herbert

so struck at this unexpected rencontre with her, and so interested for her disquietude, that, unmindful of Cecilia, his first efforts were to calm her fears ; and the sight of him in an attitude of the tenderest solicitude, imploring her not to be alarmed, one arm round her waist, the other spread on his heart, while he hung over her enamoured, was not calculated to calm the raging tempest in Miss Edwin's dressing room.

When at her repeated command they left her, she was on the point of discharging her woman ; but her peace was made, and she restored to favour by a discovery as new as unexpected.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXVI.

A Retrospect.

CECILIA's anger had been on the part of her woman quite unprovoked; it was not difficult for her to see she was the victim of her lady's resentment to another; her not thinking she looked well, was a sure sign she wished so to do; indeed this woman, whose cunning was seldom to be exceeded, well knew Mr. Herbert had a powerful advocate in the breast of Cecilia, and an indifferent spectator might as easily discern that saw him with Anna off his guard, where all his wishes lay.

This, therefore, was Miss Edwin's rival; she was more, she was the identical Anna, who some years back had rival'd Madame Frajan (for it was that very lady) in the affections of Colonel Gorget, the all accomplished; and who, as *she* had injured, it was impossible *she* could forgive; besides the gallant Colonel, though now a Baron, a man of title, was no changeling. She had at different times paid her respects to him, and as often received the compliment of one pound one, but never without regretting the loss of his little flame. Two objects, therefore, immediately offered themselves to her view,—interest and revenge;—what French *fille de chambre* could resist either.

Lord Sutton, but perhaps my reader may here accuse me of inconsistency, having once introduced that gentleman as a character universally despised, we should at our re-acquaintance find him graced with the favour of a virtuous Prince. But unheard of as it may seem for so despicable a character to be made a Lord, I entreat my readers to give credit for its veracity. In truth, the Colonel was very rich; some trifling occurrences in his past life, under the signature of Gorget, were not so pleasing to recollect in their consequences; the name was famous, it was rather *too* well known:—he, therefore, some how or other by dint of his interest with Lady Waldron, got Baron Sutton added to his consequence, whereby in public matters Gorget was forgotten.

It was this very personage whose addresses were rejected by Lady Edwin for her daughter, on account of his father's obscure original, and who found in her fortune and connections still such attractions, that he had got Madame Frajan into the family to forward once more his applications, which, if rejected, he intended to try his influence with the lady for a trip to Scotland; yet, though she was young enough to be his daughter, it did not follow her person was, as he pretended, his ultimate object; Madame Frajan knew to the contrary, and if she had not been so certain of that, the improved person and graces of Anna would have decided her opinion. She had some other reasons, which will appear in the course of this history, to hate the sight of our heroine; she, therefore, suffered Cecilia to vent her rage, till again tears supplied the want of revenge.

It was then the sly Frajan entreated her pardon for having unwillingly offended her, protested her unbounded regard and respect for so sweet, so amiable

amiable a lady, which she flattered herself she should yet be able to prove, and begged her forgiveness for a question that might appear impertinent, but which she should give sufficient reason for asking; and with great humility begged to know how long she had known the young woman Mr. Herbert seemed so fond of? The question was an irritation to the rage of her soul—Name her not, said she, stamping, one house shall not hold us: this was the cue her woman wanted.

Nor need it, Madam, answered she; is this then the Miss Mansel Lady Edwin is so wrapt up in? an impostor, a thief!—Miss Edwin was all attention, her rage subsided, and the woman restored to her favour, by repeating to her the history of our heroine; so mixed with facts, it was difficult to separate the true from the false: what the resolutions formed on this occasion were, will be seen in their consequences.

It happened that evening was Lady Edwin's grand rout, and Anna, who was now perfectly acquainted with a polite assembly, usually did the honours; receiving the company in Lady Edwin's place, who was much better pleased to sit to cards, when Mrs. and Miss Herbert were of those parties. Patty whose love to her friend, equalled her deserts, generally kept pretty close to her.—Herbert dining with Edwin, and Mr. Stanley being engaged to be with Sir William on family business, gave Cecilia a pretence for requesting to be indulged with the company of Miss Turbville; and dinner in her own apartment.

Mrs. Herbert dropping in, in the morning, begged Anna might go home with her, which Lady Cecilia the more readily agreed to, as they were to enter on matters relative to the settlement, and

it was not necessary an uninterested person should be present.

As soon as they got to Bond-street, Mrs. Herbert, whose aching heart always sat on her brow, left Anna and her daughter to themselves; the intended wedding in the family, and the finery and shew it would be attended with, for some time engrossed their conversation; Charles and Cecilia naturally succeeded: Patty observed the great alteration in her cousin, and added, that she feared Charles would prove an ungrateful swain, for she was sure that kind of woman was not the one for him; indeed, continued she, I have reason to think he is strongly attached, but where, or to whom, I cannot tell; and if that should be the case, Mamma will break her heart, as both families depend on its being a match; Lady Cecilia is so good, she waves all thoughts of fortune, in consideration of the family interest; and though my cousin has taken such a foolish turn, you know she always loved Charles, and he her:—I thought, said Anna, he had been her declared admirer ever since I have known them.

Why as to that, answered Patty, I believe my cousin was rather too sanguine in her ideas of his love; however, I hope in God it will be brought about, for Papa goes on at such a rate, we had need have nobody else to vex us.—What reason have you to doubt it, my dear; why should you suspect he has an attachment?

While Anna asked this of her friend, the situation of her mind may be guessed: I'll shew you, said Patty, drawing a lilach, breast-bow from her work-stand; I found this on his bed this morning; when he was gone out, Mamma and I went into his room to look over some of his things, I caught it up: he returned very soon in a violent bustle; did not ask me for it you may be sure, but
his

his man told Betty he wore it tied to a string round his neck, and had done so a long while; and,—looking in her friend's face at this period, she saw her pale and agitated; the alarm this gave, put the bow out of her head.

Anna was indeed ill; all that Miss Herbert said had affected her.—Poor Mrs. Herbert, destitute of any other consolation, robbed of all comfort but what centered in her son, and his establishment, how could her selfish heart give way to wishes that would counteract the only hope of so good a woman; even Patty hoped in God it would be brought about—How could she (was there no other objection) bring herself to give pain to the gentle the endearing Patty?—but when the bow was produced in evidence of her suspicion, she could no longer repress or conceal her emotions; it was with difficulty she concealed her feelings; and unable to continue so interesting a conversation, begged to go home: with great reluctance she was suffered to leave them; and Patty engaged, if her indisposition continued, to spend the evening in her apartment; if she was better they were to meet in Lady Edwin's drawing-room.

Without acquainting any body of her return, Anna flew to her room the moment she got to Grosvenor-square, and having locked the door, as if her thoughts could be seen, whispered to her fond, throbbing heart;—if Charles Herbert loved the owner of that bow, then was Anna Mansel the happy object of his attachment!

It was hers, dropped, as I have related, the week before she left Llandore. Pleasure filled her bosom, and joy throbbed in her heart; she was now sure Charles loved her; in that idea all thoughts of sorrow were banished: and I must own, to the discredit of our heroine, not one of

those very fine arguments she had made use of to Edwin, and which might with equal, if not greater propriety, have been urged to Herbert, presented themselves to her recollection, save the effect on his mother's peace.

Her bow tied round Charles's neck, was proof against all the efforts of reason or prudence ; and she indulged, for the first time, a certainty of being dear to him : but whence that coolness on his coming to London ?—No matter ;—if really cold to her, the ribband would not that very morning, have been of such importance.

Thus, happily restored to confidence in herself, she bestowed more than ordinary pains in adorning her person ; for though Herbert had taken leave, as the two young men were to dine together, perhaps, in the course of the evening, they might drop into the assembly.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXXVII.

The unguarded Moment.

LADY Edwin knew not of Anna's return, till, lovely indeed, she attended in her dressing-room, previous to going down to receive the company.

"You are so charming to-night, Anna," said Lady Edwin, "I despair of prevailing on my daughter or Miss Turbville to treat you with common good manners; but let not that disturb you, the wedding will soon take place, and Miss Edwin will go for a time with her new sister; I give you my word, the envy of little minds will never hurt you with me."

Anna gratefully thanked Lady Edwin for so kind an assurance, and regretted her loss of the young ladies' esteem; said she could not charge herself with an act that ought to have that effect.

"Look, child, in the glass," answered her patroness, "you will see a very good reason, one that will find its way into the bosom of every young lady on my list to-night."

On these happy terms, who could foresee that this was the last night she should spend under the roof of so partial a friend?

They entered the drawing-room in the greatest harmony: Miss Edwin's return to town brought many young people of both sexes of the first

fashion to the assembly ; the great Welch fortune was an inducement to the one, and the elegant stile they lived in entitled them to the acquaintance of the other.

The beautiful mistress of the ceremonies attracted every eye ; a plain white lutestring with black flowers, fancied in the most simple and elegant taste, set off her fine complexion, and her *tout ensemble*, was, indeed, striking ; innumerable were the compliments paid at the shrine of beauty by the few on whom it had power, while the two fair friends in the circle they sat were exhibiting their witty talents at the expence of an innocent woman, whose heart was warm in every good wish towards them.

As she flattered herself, so it happened ; Edwin and Charles came in about ten ; the indisposition of Anna (which they heard in Bond-street) carried them into Lady Edwin's drawing-room.

Edwin rallied her on her pallid looks, and begged for God's sake, she would be ill again. Anna told him, smiling, there were eyes in the room that would not forgive him if his were diverted from their proper object, directing him, by a glance, from her fine eyes to Miss Turbville's party ; but, reader, guess, if it is possible, her astonishment, when she saw, playing with Miss Edwin's fan, most superbly dressed, her old friend Gorget, now Lord Sutton.

Had a Gorgon faced her, the effect could not have been stronger : her colour changed, and her tremour was so visible, that Herbert, who was near her, observed it, and begged she would suffer him to attend her into the other room for air. Scarce knowing what she did, she complied, and he had the happiness of supporting in his arms, some moments after she got out, the woman he adored.

In

In this fond moment, unguarded by caution or prudence, he besought her to lean on him ; her hands were, alternately, pressed to his bosom, and he addressed her by the tenderest appellations :—this behaviour alarmed and displeased her ; and having drank a glass of water, they both attempted to recollect their scattered thoughts. Herbert, however, had gone too far to recede ; he therefore intreated her pardon for a discovery her situation had wrung from him, and eloquently pleaded the force of a passion he neither expected nor wished to conquer, though he knew it was hopeless.

Anna, who could interpret this to nothing but her dependent situation, answered haughtily, he was perfectly right, and immediately left him. More wretched and more confirmed in her love for Edwin than ever, he returned to the company pale and dejected ; and only staid to make a passing bow to Lady Edwin and the young ladies.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Disgrace.

ON account of her indisposition, Anna sent an excuse to her patroness, who returned a friendly injunction on her to be careful of herself: she passed a very restless night, an unaccountable dread seized her spirits, though innocent of a thought of offending human being; she feared she knew not what.—Just as she was leaving her chamber, a packet was given her, directed to Mrs. Herbert, by Lady Edwin's woman, with orders to deliver it immediately.

This command was as extraordinary as it was new; nevertheless as it was her part to obey, she walked to Bond-street. Mrs. Herbert was not up, and Patty was gone, on a sudden whim, to Richmond, with Charles, who made it in his way to call on a widow sister of his father to dinner; she sent up the packet with desire to know if there was an answer? After waiting an hour, Mrs. Herbert came down; but instead of the cordial, warm, reception, she had been used to from that lady, a courtesy hardly perceptible was all—she sat down.

Poor Anna could not speak at first; but when she could articulate, begged, for God's sake, to know the meaning of such a dreadful solemnity;
Mrs.

Mrs. Herbert pulled out the packet, and, opening it, looked at her very earnestly, and demanded to know how long she had assumed the name of Mansel?

Nothing had struck Anna, at the first appearance of Mrs. Herbert, but that she had discovered her attachment to Charles; her countenance, therefore, brightened up at this question, conscious of having nothing to blush at in the change of her name, she immediately told her.

"Did you wait on Mrs. Melmoth?"

"As to waiting on her," Anna said, "she should have been proud to render her any service in her power; but she had not been a servant to her."

"You left her in disgrace, child, I think?"

"I am, to this moment, ignorant what my offence was."

"There," said Mrs. Herbert, with a solemn steady voice, "is half a year's pension from Lady Edwin. Mrs. Mansel did ill in introducing you to our family; I am sorry I ever knew you; I am, at this instant, concerned more than I wish for you; have you any friends in London?"

Lady Cecilia herself had not more laudable pride than Anna. Perfectly innocent of any one action that could prejudice those ladies so much against her, and hurt as well at the matter as the manner of her discharge, she retreated from the offered money, and to the question of, "had she any friends?" answered, it is not, madam, for an orphan, who has no connections, natural or acquired, to boast of her friends; few in a more elevated station abound with them; it is enough that you, madam, must be certain I have enemies—you perhaps know, though I do not, to what length these have carried their unprovoked malice. If I have deserved to be

"dis-

“ discarded in this manner, I have no claim to
 “ the money you offer. When I am told of what
 “ I am accused, I will try to acquit myself; till
 “ then, I have only to pray for yours and the fa-
 “ mily’s happiness.”

This said, with an air of injured pride and in-
 nocence, she was going, but recollecting herself,
 “ asked if she was to return no more to Grosve-
 “ nor-square, how she was to get her things?

“ They will be sent where you direct,” an-
 swered Mrs. Herbert.

On which she set down with her pencil, as the
 only place she could recollect, the inn where the
 Brecknock stage put up. On her arrival in town,
 and leaving the house, called a hackney-coach,
 threw herself into it, and bid the man drive to
 Whitechapel, where the stage from Dalton’s vil-
 lage stopped; being just in time, she immediately
 proceeded to Layton.

The whole transaction had been so sudden, and
 so unexpected, that she could scarce credit her
 senses, or believe she was now on the road to Lay-
 ton. One comfort, indeed, offered itself—she
 had not left Charles Herbert behind. On recol-
 lecting and putting together circumstances, she
 concluded, she must owe to Colonel Gorget’s ill
 will this new misfortune; but what could provoke
 him to this inveterate persecution of her she could
 not imagine, except it was the disappointment of
 his wicked attempts on her when quite a child;
 yet the time was so short, from that she had part-
 ed with Lady Edwin, on such very cordial terms.
 She could not conceive the method he must have
 taken to work so quick a ruin; she thought and
 thought again, and the coach stopped at Dalton’s
 door before she had pleased herself in her con-
 jecture.

When

When Dalton saw her and looked in her dejected countenance, he exclaimed, "What, the bad money returned."

This salute in her present situation and state of mind was too much; her tears moved Mrs. Dalton, who received her very kindly, and begged she would not make herself uneasy; that she would be always welcome there. "Ay, ay," said Dalton, "for a while, so she shall, but it is time she knew how to get her bread." This was her own opinion; but how it was to be done, was the point. Spight of herself, some latent hopes would arise that she might, one day, be united to Charles, and in that case, would the proud Cambridges of his family ever acknowledge a mantua-maker or a milliner? What, then, could she do? She could think of nothing else, and Dalton still harping on a trade, Mrs. Dalton said, that as Peggy was now out of her time, and in business for herself, Anna might try a little with her first. To this she made no objection, when she should arrange her little matters; during which period, she told the greedy Dalton, she would pay for her board; *that* Mrs. Dalton positively refused.

Anna sent for her things, which were left, as she directed; when they were delivered at the door, her heart sunk; she had hoped either letter or message would have accompanied them, that would give some light into what had been her offence, or, perhaps, an invitation to return: two or three days elapsed, and no news from Grosvenor square, or (what was worse) from Bond-street.

C H A P. XXXIX.

The Correspondence.

THE fourth day Anna received the following billets:

“ When last I saw and pleaded the cause of love, awed by your frowns, and silenced by your peremptory commands, I feared, I must for ever drop the rapturous hope of possessing the loveliest of women; but you will now, perhaps, hear that from reason, passion durst not plead. Any settlement in my power to command is yours; family, friends, even country, shall be sacrificed to the wishes of my charming Anna, whose name in future, shall be that of her adorer, if she chuses to assume it. Write to me, I beseech you; I need not put any other signature than that of the man who most loves: you will recollect whom.

BILLET THE SECOND.

“ Madam,

“ It was with difficulty I traced you so as to receive your address: the transient view I had of you at Lady Edwin’s assembly, gave me hopes I should have an opportunity of offering you any service in
my

my power, as the friendship I felt for you at Melmoth Lodge is still fresh in my memory.

I was much surprized, on inquiring of that lady, this morning, to hear you was discharged that family. I do not mean an impertinent inquiry into the cause, but I desire Miss Dalton will honour me with any commands that may be acceptable to her, in the power of, madam,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

SUTTON."

BILLET THE THIRD.

"Ah! my dear Anna, what can your Patty say to comfort you under such cruel mortification! You need not tell me you are innocent; how little do those know you who can think otherwise; I long to see you, but am forbid by all the family; poor mamma, bears the blame from every body—how he came by it I do not know, but my cousin has a direction which he says will find you, if it does, pray write to your

P. H.

"P. S. You must direct to me under cover to Mr. Edwin; he is your staunch friend and advocate."

Indignation at the two first of these notes gave way to pleasure at the last; tears of gratitude filled her eyes—"Sweet friend, dear girl," flowed from her lips; she resolved to answer that immediately, for two reasons; one was, she wished to oblige Miss Herbert; the other, she longed to know what she could be accused of—yet how could she approve of the means of corresponding Patty proposed; as little

as she knew or suspected of the ways of intrigue, it was plain, directing to Miss Herbert under Mr. Edwin's cover, would give him a pretence to visit her, an honour by no means desirable in his and her present situation; for did he not profess to love her, a profession injurious to the peace of the lady he was about to marry, as well as insulting to her own honour; yet how else to write to her friend, so as to prevent her lying under the displeasure of the family? And if she did not write, would her silence not give Patty an impression of her ingratitude—it was impossible; could she otherwise find out of what crime she had been accused, or by whom, or could she by any other means ever know any thing of Charles? The last thought decided the point, and the following short note was dispatched:

“TO MISS HERBERT.

“May you never, my dearest friend, by being in distress, experience the kind of joy your note gave me; yet I do not approve of this means of thanking you——Of what am I accused? only tell me that——I cannot wish to engage my friend in a correspondence which must be blameable in her, as being forbid by her family; but that one favour, till better times, is all I ask of my Patty, who will forgive the declining any farther use of Mr. Edwin's friendship, to her ever grateful and affectionate

ANNA.”

Having wrote this, Anna set herself in earnest about thinking of future subsistence; although Dalton's harsh expressions hurt her, yet she could not in justice disapprove them; she saw his large family, all of whom were now getting their own livelihood by the laudable exertions of industry—Peggy, the

the eldest, lived with them, and contributed to their general support; she had a great deal of work about the village, and it being now summer, when most young folks in the middle line of life, have what new clothes they can afford, was very full of business---the assistance of our heroine was therefore no less timely than acceptable, and her natural taste being good, she very soon took all the trimming and ornamental part on herself; added to this, her late residence in the great world, enabled her to instruct Miss Dalton in the fashions most in vogue, whose fame in consequence became so great, that the ladies, that is to say, the tradesmen's wives, who, either by the success of industry, or a spirit of prodigality, had country-houses began to employ and recommend her to each other, so that business came in very fast, and Dalton, consequently more civil.

But the latent disease of the mind depends not on either success or disappointment in the common occurrences of life; and pride had too great a share in Anna's composition to render her easy in such a situation.

Lord Sutton's letter had excited in her no other emotions than those of hatred and contempt; she was sure his ill offices had a second time robbed her of her protectress; and so rooted was her bad opinion of him, she dreaded no evil but what she imagined would originate with him: his letter was therefore tossed into the fire with the most perfect scorn and indifference---and here it may be necessary to remind my reader, in Miss Edwin's chamber scene, which discovered Anna to Frajan, the former was too much taken up to observe the latter; her attention was divided between Cecilia and Herbert, or if she did, had not the slightest recollection of her person during the few minutes she was in the room, a circumstance that will not appear strange, if

if we recollect Frajan not owning herself married, the appellation merely as a French waiting woman in all genteel families is mademoiselle only, and Anna being always in Lady Edwin's apartments, it was next to impossible, during the short time she continued in Grosvenor square, after Miss Edwin's return from Bedfordshire, she could have any personal knowledge of her attendant; so that she could form no conjecture of the author of her disgrace in the Edwin family that did not point at his Lordship.

Many returns of the post and no letter from Miss Herbert, at length, wearied out with expectations, and mortified with continual disappointments, she wished to turn her thoughts to things within her own absolute reach; and though conscious she had taught Dalton's daughter more than it was possible *she* could learn from her, yet, tired with the father's continual teasing, her consent was obtained to be bound for two years to the business, and he joyfully applied to an attorney to draw the indentures: however, before this matter could be completed, it was entirely put a stop to.

They were (that is, the young women) at work one morning in a room appropriated for that purpose, when an uncommon rattling of coach wheels under the window, and a loud rap at the door, excited their curiosity; but what was Anna's surprise, to see Lord Sutton alight from a superb carriage; indeed it took from her the power of speech; and while Peggy was making a thousand conjectures concerning the object of this visit, from a person in a coroneted coach, Anna was absorbed in her own ideas, wholly unable to comprehend the meaning of so unwelcome an intrusion.

Lord Sutton was shewn in, and Dalton instantly recollected in the visage of the noble Lord, him who had made four years before such alarming enquiries

quiries after Anna, felt guilty and abashed, and doubting from his splendid appearance the day of reckoning was come—Trembling and pale, it was with infinite difficulty he could muster up courage to ask the stranger's business.

Lord Sutton, proud only of his rank, riches and splendour, found his vanity highly gratified by the visible confusion of the poor parson, who he supposed was confounded at his grandeur.

After enjoying some moments with the appearance of the most stately indifference, the confusion he excited, he changed at once the haughty Peer into the artful insinuating sycophant, made many apologies to Mr. Dalton for his intrusion, which, he said, was occasioned by his desire to serve a young person under their protection, who, though she had been discarded by a relation of his who had taken her when very young, was, he presumed, too well educated to be capable of being useful to an inferior state of life, and too handsome to be safe in such an age as this from the pursuits of the licentious.

Mrs. Dalton whose heart had nothing wrong about it but what she derived from her husband, without the least guile in her own composition, was in raptures at this kindness; she was ready to worship him, and heaped praises in the warmth of *her* heart, his told him *he* could never deserve—but whatever happy presage this good woman's credulity gave him, he was not less surprised than vexed, to observe the husband's silence (for he had not spoke since the first salutation) proceeded from some other cause than mere respect for his Lordship. He, therefore, addressed him with praises for his humanity to Anna, so profuse, that Dalton, conscious how little merit he could plead on that account, felt himself more hurt than gratified; and
callous

callous as was his conscience, turned the many compliments paid him to an ironical meaning. Undetermined therefore, in his ideas, he interrupted his guest, by asking him bluntly, if he had not seen him before.

Lord Sutton, although exceedingly disconcerted, was too great an adept in hypocrisy to suffer it to be seen. With an affable smile he commended the retentive memory of the preacher, which he supposed must be of great advantage both to himself and his flock, and answered he was not mistaken, that he had felt the same compassion then for his ward he yet retained, and that in consequence thereof he had made those inquiries, which were of great trouble to himself, without (he spoke it with regret) serving the young lady, as he, Mr. Dalton, positively denied any knowledge of her, a conduct he must own, quite inexplicable to him. "And pray, Sir," said the still doubting parson, "who may you be?" "my name, Sir, perhaps (at least if you have read the history of the success of our armies abroad) you may have heard—it is Gorget"—"I had the honour to command the army in the East Indies; my poor services his Majesty has thought proper to reward with a title; Lord Sutton, at your service."—The room instantly became too small; the cringing Dalton, reassured no danger was nigh, immediately adopted the utmost servility both of speech and countenance; while his wife, in endeavouring to clear away her litter, threw every thing into disorder. A Lord was a being in whose presence it was impossible for them to sit; nor could all his condescension prevail on either of them to take a chair, till he arose himself and absolutely refused to resume his seat, except they favoured him with their company.

He

He then artfully begged to consult them on the means likely to be of service to Anna, declining their first offer of calling her down. Dalton, who never for a moment lost sight of his own interest, explained to his Lordship her present situation, and what he had planned for her with his daughter; adding, that as his Lordship was so very good and charitable, if he would recommend them to work for the great ladies of his acquaintance, it might be the making of both.

Sutton, with all his caution, could hardly keep his temper at this proposal; he had in the care of Frajan took large strides to place a French waiting woman of infamous principles, in attendance on a young lady of fashion and character; but to take on himself to recommend a couple of honest young women as mantuamakers,—what could the fellow mean? Nevertheless he seemingly acquiesced—one only objection struck him; he said, he doubted whether Anna was not more qualified for the station she had just left; he feared so sedentary a life would not suit her education; and as to their daughter, it should be his study to evince his respect for the parent, by his friendship to the child; he would recommend *her*, whether Anna continued with her or not.

This set the matter in a new light. His Lordship was the best judge; he had only to signify his pleasure to them, and they would obey to the utmost in their power all his injunctions. Mrs. Dalton then repeated the motion of calling Anna; his Lordship bowed his assent. She immediately carried this joyful news to our heroine, not doubting but she would be in ecstasies; but the cold and contemptuous reception of the great friendship that waited her acceptance, together with her absolute refusal to go down, almost petrified the poor woman; *what* not go down to a *Lord*, not accept

accept of *his* offered services? what would this world come to! "Indeed Anna," continued she, "I never till now could credit what Mr. Dalton has often seen in you; your pride will, as he says, I am afraid, come down."

Anna, piqued at this speech, sat silently to her work; but on Mrs. Dalton's still urging her to go to his Lordship, she suddenly threw it down, and told her she would follow her. This she did from a determination to let Lord Sutton see she was not the dupe of his artifice, and farther to convince him she was not likely to become so. Accordingly Mrs. Dalton announced her intention, and in she went. Transient as was Lord Sutton's view of her at the assembly, it had left her image deeply rooted in his heart; the beautiful girl of fourteen he had never ceased regretting the loss of, and the voice which reigned predominant in his soul, was continually placing her innocence and budding charms before him in a light too acceptable to his libertine principles: but when the same beauty, innocence, and simplicity again met his eyes, adorned with every grace and accomplishment—when the sweetness and charms of her countenance struck him, more captivating from their maturity, he felt, what he had never yet felt, a sincere passion; which to gratify he was determined at all events, be the expence or trouble what it would.

When the fair victim, he now resolved never to lose sight of, appeared before him, when he again beheld her, a tremour seized his guilty frame; he hesitated and faltered, but endeavouring to conceal by a low and respectful bow the disorder of his countenance; he paid her compliments on her improvements, which from any other person might have flattered the vanity of a young woman: but here resentment, at the un-

provoked

provoked ill offices and recollection of the base advantage he had taken of her unprotected state at Melmoth Lodge, were too strong for a plausible appearance and fine speeches to do away ; and the humble situation in which he found her so far from mortifying or abashing her, only stimulating her pride ; with a haughty air, she demanded his business.

This was a reception the proud, yet mean, Lord was not prepared for ; and again his admiration of the lovely object before him deprived him of all his guard and fortitude : he, however, attempted to gloss over both his letter and visit, by alledging compassion and humanity as his motives for both.

Oh ! ye divine sources of every comfort to the distressed, how were ye here prostituted to the worst of purposes !

Anna thanked him ; but as she could subsist independent of his offered kindness, insisted on declining that and every favour from him. Your youth, Madam, said he, and inexperience of the world you are to live in, is with me an apology for this return to the warm effusions of friendship and good will. I was once, it is true, so unfortunate as to offend the purity of your ideas ; but assure yourself, Miss Mansel, I was then, as now, incapable of meaning you injury ; you must allow for the prejudices of education, for the free manners in a man the world not only dispenses with, but even approves. I have been, I do not deny that *I am*, a free liver with respect to your sex ; meeting, therefore, alone, a pretty girl, I might, without a farther thought, be tempted to steal a few kisses.

The indignation and shame which filled the heart and countenance of Anna at this varnished excuse, were too apparent not to strike him with conviction of her incredulity ; but he had other ends in view than speaking to her, it was at the Daltons ; they, he had the satisfaction to see, eagerly credited his professions, and as eagerly condemned the conduct of their ward to so great a man.

The liberties he had taken, with the insult he had offered her, he was very conscious would not bear the excuses he had made ; but he depended on her modesty and delicacy for her silence. He was right ; the injured and innocent was now in her turn abashed and confused ; it was but for a moment however, her natural pride and integrity, reanimated by the recollection of the distress this man had brought on her, enabled her, with a rejecting motion of her hand, to tell him, if the world were so indulgent to such actions as he had been guilty of, and such principles as he possessed, it was the fittest place for him, and the most unfit for her to figure in ; she therefore begged he would return to it, adding, she was too sensible of the obligations she was already under to him, particularly *late ones*, to wish to increase them ; and courtesying contemptuously, withdrew.

Every word and action increased the anger and astonishment of the Daltons ; who, from the moment he announced himself a Lord, set themselves down as made people ; he already fancying himself in a fat living, she with delight anticipating the aggrandisement of her family through his recommendation, and having herself no idea of wounded delicacy or insulted honour, nor suspecting the open, candid, humane person before them of plotting the ruin of innocence, could not

com-

comprehend from what madness or folly Anna could thus refuse such desirable and advantageous offers of friendship. The rude answers she returned destroyed the castles they were building and left traces of disappointment on their countenances much more visible than on that of their visitor; he knew how to take advantage of this disposition in them, and with an air at once of sorrow and chagrin, lamented the obstinacy of Anna, that put it out of his power to gratify his own wishes in serving her. However, Madam, said he, turning to Mrs. Dalton, though it is hard to meet unthankfulness where we know we deserve gratitude, suffer me to recommend this poor ill judging young woman to your farther protection; and since she refuses my good will, permit me to request you will accept this trifle towards the expence she must be of to you, and promise not to make her acquainted with it. Having said this he shook hands with the Parson with great apparent cordiality, and stepping into his carriage, was no sooner out of sight than eager to examine the contents of a purse that felt so very respectably, Dalton and his wife retired to a little inner room,—twenty guineas was a sum sufficient to give force to weaker arguments than those used by Lord Sutton; it set his in an unanswerable point of view, it established their notions of his generosity, and revived the hopes they had formed from his acquaintance.

After much deliberation it was agreed they should join in persuading Anna to write to such a noble friend, ask pardon for her ingratitude, and implore his returning favour. Accordingly they went to her, and having extolled his goodness both to them and her, got the assistance of their daughter, and all three beset her with arguments

and entreaties, by soothing and threats, by fair means or foul, with equal success ; she was too sensible of what was right, and her principles were too justly founded to suffer her judgment to be biassed where her honour was concerned ; she saw with grief he had found the weak side of Mrs. Dalton, and the wicked one of her husband ; and that in consequence she must expect to be farther persecuted.

But as rapes, and carrying off by force, so generally related in modern novels, had not been part of her readings, and are things that do not often happen in real life, she apprehended no other danger from him ; indeed his age and feeble habit of body were securities from those evils ; she therefore contented herself with hopes to hear no more, than from the Daltons, of a man for whom, and for no other person living, she felt a real hatred, and continued her negative to all their arguments without assigning to the Daltons her reasons. Perhaps she may be accused here of a blameable reserve ; but true delicacy and true virtue even feels the strongest repugnance to think of, much less repeat, actions hostile to their tenets ; and it is to those who really possess that character a kind of humiliation to admit they have ever been insulted.

But the grand account of a life devoted to injury and deceit practised on the innocent and unwary, was now to be settled on the heart of Lord Sutton.

The elegant deportment, the charms of our heroine, appeared the more irresistible from the difficulty that attended his pursuit ; his soul long rendered callous by a continual guard of himself, and the gratification of almost every inclination he had suffered himself to indulge, its faculties weakened,

kened, and his person so debilitated and infirm, that he was become an antidote to that sex who had been his former prey, now received impressions that deprived him of rest and peace—the more he reflected, the more ardent was his passion—he cursed his own precipitancy at Melmoth Lodge, and firmly resolved to let no thought or look escape him now to alarm or increase her dislike of him; all his thoughts were bent on the means of attaining the possession of what seemed necessary to his existence. How to compass this desirable point, did not appear so easy as he wished; but to give up any design once formed, or leave one stratagem of fraud or hypocrisy untried, would have been as new as the passion which now filled the mind of Lord Sutton.

His arts, in conjunction with Frajan, had robbed her of every friend but those (if they might be called so) she was now with; the power of wealth, joined to the artifice he was master of, he had no doubt would be all the force he wished with Dalton and his wife; but what method he should pursue to render Anna propitious to his desires, was the thing that most puzzled him.

It was unnecessary to subdue her pride as well as virtue; to do this she must become dependent on him—his friendship must become indispensably necessary to her subsistence.

Again the idea of solely devoting to her his charming person revived, and with it a resolution immediately to pick a quarrel with a widow of pleasing person and large family, whom poverty had induced to listen to his addresses, and accepted the place of mistress of his town-house in the room of a high-bred lady who had left him in company with a discarded groom: his own pride had made him dress this woman out with great elegance;

but as it required art, as well as attraction, to keep alive the appearance of passion in the noble Peer, and as this lady was not an adept in her calling, he felt no kind of concern for her or hers; and the most she could boast was a kind of splendid misery.

CHAP.

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C H A P. XL.

An odd Old Man.

ANNA in the mean time attended to the business, though Dalton ceased to teaze her about the articles: it was impossible in a small country village so near the metropolis, when the chief inhabitants were the wives and daughters of tradesmen that could not exist without a country house, of which number there were many at Layton, such a figure as hers should be unnoticed; she soon became the subject of curiosity, of admiration, and of scandal. Who and what can she be? She is very handsome—she dresses too elegant—is too accomplished and genteel for a mantuamaker—she has certainly been somebody's mistress. A coroneted coach with a glaring suite of attendants, stopping above an hour at the door, with a gentleman only in it, brought subject for censure and confirmation with it at the assembly of Mrs. Bibbins. The same evening a very pretty, delicate young man, designed by nature for a retailer of gauze, but jumbled by chance into a brandy merchant, as he was called, assured the ladies, in the softest lisping tone imaginable, that he was certain she had been in high life, for that he had seen her in a box at the Opera, when he and his sister

(a young lady then present) were in the gallery ; which was confirmed with the additions of Miss's being sure she was one of those bold women, viz. a kept one—she knew her again the moment she saw her. This matter settled, not a person in company, save *one*, but had penetration enough to discover the most innocent countenance that ever graced the creation, to be one of the abandoned cast ;—that one was a woman.

Mrs. Wellers was the wife of a merchant who had retired from trade with a decent competency, leaving an only and deserving son in possession of his all, which was employed in procuring him a footing in a bank of great reputation, where he was at first placed as cashier ; his sobriety and attention insured him that success, and impowered him to make those returns to his worthy parents, their noble confidence in him deserved : he married a woman of plain person and manners, with an excellent heart, and large fortune : they had several children ; and Mrs. Wellers saw the goodness of her own disposition, and the universal goodwill she bore the whole human race, richly rewarded in the particular prosperity of her own ; entirely at peace with herself, and satisfied with the uprightness of her own mind and actions, she was the last to believe any reports that could injure or distress an individual, and the first to seize on every occasion of vindicating an absent person.

Mr. Wellers had taken very much lately to frequenting Mr. Dalton's chapel, and though he had no crimes out of the common frailties of human nature to repent of himself, he was a great encourager of religious practices in those who had : the doctor himself did not take more pains with his hearers than Mr. Wellers ; and often his house was subject to guests of his spiritual acquaintance not very acceptable to his wife ; notwithstanding, the

the sweetness of her disposition made her give way, with great good humour, to those little whims in a man she had thirty-four years entirely loved and honoured ; and sometimes she had been prevailed on to go to chapel with him.

It was here our heroine had struck her ; not indeed in the light the rest of the company had seen her ; she felt herself prepossessed in favour of that beauty and simplicity she thought shone in her countenance : and having in the course of employing Peggy Dalton been frequently in company with her, she immediately, and with no little warmth, defended the condemned Anna ; I wish I could say with success, but that fiat was gone out ; to be convinced by arguments supported only by candour and benevolence, against such glaring crimes as youth, beauty, and poverty, would be proof of a weak and yielding mind, few people chuse to be guilty of ; and to recant an opinion formed on such strong grounds, a condescension not to be expected.

The good Mrs. Wellers was not intimidated by her want of success ; her thorough knowledge of life, and perfect practice of politeness, rendered her the leader of every thing else in the village ; but she had not power to enforce her own candid and generous sentiments ; yet as, when once a character was attacked, she gave not up her point while a possibility remained of defending the absent, she had *not* seldom the pleasure of finding herself rewarded for her perseverance, by seeing, with the assistance of a little time and patience, every doubt removed, and innocence cleared up.

It is much to be lamented, notwithstanding this is a circumstance which daily happens, it is often protracted by one unlucky accident or other, till the calumniators are either removed from the spot, or themselves in the same calamity they so unmerci-

fully inflicted on others, otherwise something like shame might possibly operate for the general advantage of mankind.

When this worthy woman left Mrs. Bibbins, she began to resolve in her own mind the several circumstances she had refused to credit in the course of her visit.

There was certainly something more in the appearance of Anna than in the common run of young women in her situation; her dress, so much superior to Dalton's daughters, either wholly contradicted his assertion, that he had brought her up on charity, or if that was so, spoke a mystery in which she found herself interested, and resolved to take the first opportunity of finding out.

Anna, conscious of no cause for shame, saw herself an object of general observation; but as she had always been that, though from different motives, it had no other effect on her than restraining her from walking out, when a recess from work would have allowed her that recreation.

It happened, that the next morning after Mrs. Bibbins' rout, Anna was surprized by another visitor, as unexpected, and undesired, though not quite so odious, as Lord Sutton: this was Mr. Edwin; he was shewn, or rather walked, into the room, where she was at that moment in conversation with Mrs. Wellers; her crimson'd cheek immediately directed the eyes of that deserving woman to the gentleman, in whose countenance the greatest satisfaction appeared, and whose glances at our heroine ill accorded with his affirmative, on being asked whether she might congratulate him on his marriage.

Mrs. Wellers made an offer of going; but Anna, who happened to be quite alone, and not chusing to be left with Edwin, intreated her stay, under pretence of expecting Peggy Dalton, though she

she in reality knew she was gone to town, and would not return till evening. Curiosity added weight to her request; and the lady, to the visible displeasure of the gentleman, was defeated.

He told Anna they were just returned from Bedfordshire; that he had suffered, with great anxiety, any constraint that prevented him from waiting on her; assured her he had shared the mortifications *she* had received from *his* family, and, that all he could command was at her service.

This very open declaration from a man who acknowledged himself a bridegroom, staggered Mrs. Wellers' good opinion of our heroine, more especially as it was received in silence.

After a pause, Anna inquired of the health of Lady Edwin and her daughter.

The latter, he told her, was with Mrs. Edwin, the former gone to Wales.

"Accompanied, I suppose," answered Anna, "by Mrs. Herbert and her family." An assenting bow called up another blush—Mrs. Wellers had now almost given up the cause of poor Anna; when she was most agreeably surprised, after a second pause, to hear her address her visitor in a very solemn manner.

She told him, however honoured she might be, by his condescending to take notice of a person who had been so contemptuously dismissed his family, she must beg leave to remind him, that the more destitute and friendless she was, the more it behoved her to take care of what only she could call her own, which was her good name—"Far, Sir," continued she, "be it from me to insinuate, the son of my benefactress, a married man, a bridegroom, would wilfully do any thing that could lead to a deprivation of that most invaluable treasure: but you must forgive me, Sir,
" if

“ if I remind you of the utter impropriety of a
 “ young woman of my rank receiving visits from
 “ a person of yours, in the predicament in which
 “ I now stand with your family : should any officious tale-bearer but mention the circumstance
 “ of your being here this morning, would it not
 “ justly offend ladies, for whom I have a sincere veneration ?—Pardon me, Sir, (for he was eagerly interrupting her) the conclusion drawn might
 “ no less affect your peace than my character ;
 “ I therefore must beg to be excused seeing
 “ you, if, at any future period, you should take
 “ Layton in your way.”

This plain dealing was by no means acceptable to Mr. Edwin, who gave Mrs. Wellers a look of displeasure, and intreated Anna to favour him with five minutes conference.

The request was refused as eagerly as asked—He insisted on it—She was immoveable.

Great as was his chagrin and disappointment, he did not chuse to discover half what he felt ; he, therefore, rising, told her, he would take some more favourable opportunity of waiting upon her with his message from Miss Herbert.

“ Have you then, Sir, any message from her,
 “ and could you be so cruel as to detain it so long—
 “ Alas ! I feared she had forgot me,” answered Anna.

The starting tear, as she finished the sentence, thrilled the heart of Edwin, who only made use of Miss Herbert’s name to gain his point of speaking to her, but a farther thought now presented itself to him, as a stratagem by which he might get her fully in his power : he therefore, in a cool, resentful manner, wished her a good morning ; said he saw she was engaged, but hoped to be more fortunate in the next visit he had the honour of paying her.

Anna

Anna would now have wished to detain him, but could not prevail on herself to make any farther attempt.

When he got to the door, his servants had retired to a neighbouring alehouse, which the convenience of an adjoining shed entitled to the name of inn—Edwin, at no time a good master, now, that he saw himself mortified, and his hopes founded on Anna's situation so entirely repressed, was in no humour to forgive this stolen refreshment; he swore he would break the rascal's bones; and seeing an elderly decent person on the opposite side of the way looking earnestly at him, asked if he had seen his scoundrels?

The person, unaccustomed to such a laconic address, gruffly answered, he was not used to look after scoundrels.

Irritated at his words, and more at his manner, Edwin fiercely threatened to horsewhip him into better manners.

The man, as much a stranger to a drubbing as the fear of one, instantly crossed the way—Edwin, in the pride of riches and prosperity (forgetting that a breach of the peace might subject a man of the first consequence to inconvenience) was as good as his word, handsomely making use of his whip.

The neighbourhood, alarmed at such an outrage to a person who unfortunately was no small favourite of the poor of the place, came to his assistance, and our bridegroom was soon in the safe custody of a blacksmith, constable, and his assistant a collar maker.

The person he had insulted, to his infinite surprise, proved one of the wealthiest men in that part of that country; one, who was above a pecuniary compensation, and whose rage at the affront

front as well as injury would admit of no palliation.

An action at law he knew would be a means of putting the assailant to an expence; *that*, he could not suppose would be an object to the young gentleman: he therefore wisely determined to take him before a magistrate, and prosecute him for the assault.

Edwin, whose understanding was exceeding good, and whose knowledge of the laws and customs of his country had not been, even in his tour, neglected, saw the disagreeable predicament in which his passions had involved him, endeavoured to assuage the resentment of Mr. Bently, but in vain; before a magistrate he should go, and give security to answer his offence at the next quarter sessions.

Ineligible as this situation was for a man of fashion, there being no remedy, he got some of the bye-standers to hunt out his servants, not wishing to return to Dalton in so disgraceful a situation. The men were soon found, and it was lucky for them his wrath had met such a set down; he bid them follow him with an execration delivered between his teeth, which was productive of a fresh offence, as his vindictive adversary immediately took witness of it, in order to oblige him to pay the penalty for profane swearing. Never was poor young man of gallantry treated with less respect or ceremony, during their walk to Mr. Justice Strap's; the iron gate being unfolded by a servant in livery, who was, in Scrub's true explanation of his service, his twin brother; one part, indeed, of his business exceeded the Herculean labour of Farquhar's original, since to the duties of gardener, coachman, footman, and groom, was added that of clerk and prompter to his master; although the fees of office were not part of his

his earnings; a hardship under which he was obliged to be content for many reasons, the principal of which was his having been a tradesman in the village at the time his master worked as journeyman with a barber in the same place; and, by misfortunes it was neither in his power to foresee nor prevent, gradually reducing in his circumstances in the same progression as the fortunate Mr. Strap had rose, and at this period having a wife and family on the spot, the said generous justice had taken him in the above several capacities out of charity, for which he allowed him eight shillings per week.

By this grey-headed servant or clerk, then, our party was ushered into his worship's presence.

Salutations, not, indeed, of the most friendly kind passed between his worship and Mr. Bently, who told a plain matter of fact tale, producing witnesses to support his charge. Mr. Strap had, therefore, nothing to do but ask the delinquent whether he had any, and what bail to offer, as if he had not, a mittimus, which Arnold was ordered to produce, must be filled up.

Edwin was much better acquainted with the power of Strap than he was himself; and having sufficiently cooled since he offered the offence, begged to speak with both gentlemen without other witnesses; he found great difficulty attending this request, Mr. Justice Strap being a very placable person, and by no means capable of giving offence where it could be returned, and Mr. Bently still smarting under the weight of his daring breach of the laws of society.

At length, however, the favour was granted, after the precaution on the side of the magistrate, of a whisper to Arnold, when having told his family

family and connections, he made every acknowledgement possible for a gentleman, and offered any satisfaction for the affront; this *éclaircissement* had a very different effect on his two auditors. The justice forgot to enforce the necessity of a *mittimus*, in the very great respect he professed for the person who was to have been the object of it; he protested was it him, he should rather look on the little passionate fall of such a man as a piece of good fortune than otherwise, as it was the means of putting it in his power to confer an obligation, where it was the highest honour to receive one, and made no doubt but Mr. Bently would be of his opinion.

“Not quite so fast, good Mr. Justice,” answered that gentleman, “speak for yourself; you and I see this matter very differently; you, I perceive, are inclined to pardon in Mr. Edwin, actions that would ruin one of his footmen; as to the good fortune of a horse-whipping from a great man,—why I wish you had it with all my heart; but *this* is not the *first* time you and I have been of contrary opinions; if this *man* (for I will not call him *gentleman*) was of less consequence, his offence would be less likewise; and was it not in his power to injure society as much by example as precept, the particular affront offered *me*, should not excite an unforgiving spirit.

“But here comes a great man, and, like *your* honour, (bowing to Edwin) he happens to be out of humour about a wench, a hare, a card, the turn of a dice, or some such *important* matter: well, he chances to meet some insignificant fellow, whose head being happily free from any such impressions, is quietly following his concerns on the King’s high road, thinking nor meaning injury to any created being; poh, says
“the

" the great man, *you* shall not tread the same
" ground, breathe the same air, look erect, or
" wear your beard like me ; but why, and like
" your honour, (bowing again to Edwin) not be-
" cause I am better, older, or wiser, but because
" I am *richer* than you.

" That may be an incontrovertible reason with
" you, Mr. Justice ; but I am, as I dare say you
" think, an odd, obstinate, old fellow ; and it
" gives me great pleasure just now to stand in the
" medium between the overbearance of the rich,
" and the rights of the poor. If my groom,
" please your worship, being a lusty young fellow,
" had laid an old man by the heels, I would have
" punished him legally, or sent him into confine-
" ment as an insane. Mr. Edwin's front, to be
" sure, has nothing wanting *in it* ; but, never-
" theless, I see there no stronger plea to excite
" compassion than in Dick Grovers."

" Compassion," answered Edwin scornfully,
" your age—"

" Ah, generous youth, would thou hadst be-
" fore remembered it," as scornfully retorted
Bently.

" I see," said Edwin, " every concession but
" adds to your insolence." Then addressing him-
self to the magistrate, mentioned the difficulty he
was under about bail, as it was in the county of
Essex, where he could not recollect an individual
he knew.

The civil Mr. Strap undertook to take care of
every thing of that kind, ordering Arnold to stand
up for one, and the constable for the other. This
being adjusted, Mr. Bently retired, and Edwin
acknowledged the politeness of the justice, and in-
viting him to Portman square, was, by him, most
obsequiously attended to the outward gate.

He

He left Layton with the most mortifying reflections ; sincerely did he condemn the passion, by which he had put himself in the power of such a low-bred fellow, as he called Bently ; and bitterly did he curse the pride of her who occasioned it, not that he minded the law, but the story might get wind. What excuse could he make for visiting Anna at all ? Some terms it was necessary he should keep up with his family, and the little remains of respect he felt for his parents, who he knew would be much hurt at the idea of his being carried like a felon before a petty magistrate, not a little disturbed him. This train of reflections brought him back to his servants, both of whom he ordered to be discharged the instant he got to town ; they *then*, bound by no interest nor awed by fear, told the whole affair in the servants' hall ; and, before six, it was a settled thing among Mr. Edwin's domestics, that their master kept Miss Mansel.

Mr. Dalton and his family, I have said, were out, the day Edwin was at the village ; they were gone, by invitation, to dine (where my reader will not expect to find them) with no less a person than Lord Sutton ; there the splendour of the house, magnificent service of plate, quantity of servants, and rich liveries, opened a new world never seen or suspected before by that family ; they were first suffered to wait, in view of riches that appeared endless, till their ideas of the owner were accompanied with an awe which increased with each new thing that appeared ; and as their waiting was protracted for no other reason than to give them impressions suitable to his purpose, his entrance into the room, with the most placid smiles upon his countenance, cordially shaking hands with Dalton, and saluting his wife and daughter, almost turned their brain.

He

He immediately entered into a very free conversation with them, adopting their manner of discourse, and gave them a dinner, abounding with every delicacy the season afforded ; to which was added, the various superfluities, which, at the command of the rich, are taught to counteract the law of nature, by bringing the bloom of spring to deck a winter table, and spreading it in summer with the hoary appendages of winter. The most costly and delicate viands were handed round in a plenty and profusion, of which the humble visitants knew not the name ; and the waiter, vainly, though with the most servile respect, offered to people, who were strangers to the custom of using it at table—A desert fit for the entertainment of a royal guest followed.

Wonder and admiration kept silent those for whom so much pains had been taken, and the table would have been cleared without its being touched, but for the great attention and solicitude of the noble Lord, whose polite recommendation of each different fruit and confectionary drew them out of their wonder into a more substantial enjoyment of the things before them.

When the servants withdrew, having impressed his guests with equal ideas of his riches, politeness, and generosity, he artfully, by inquiries into their income, and expressing his surprise it was so small, threw out hints of many different ways by which it might be enlarged.—Suppose Dalton's return to the church, as he had connection, and, indeed, he flattered himself, interest with some of the first people, in whose particular line presentations lay ; in the mean while, till something could be done, he must insist on their accepting an annuity from him ; he could not bear so amiable a woman as Mrs. Dalton should feel an inconvenience it was in his power to prevent, or
so

so worthy a man as her husband want any friendship he could command. And having made sure his way, he now ventured to mention their ward; he grieved her pride and obstinacy deprived him of the pleasure of doing her a twofold service, that of assisting herself, and that of relieving them from the burden of supporting her; asked them whether they could tell on what occasion she had been dismissed Lady Edwin's family.

Mrs. Dalton's answer was consistent with truth; she lamented Anna's obstinacy in refusing his favours, which he was grieved she still persisted in, though she had no friend else in the world; as to be sure, though she pretended to be ignorant of the cause by which she had lost the protection of the Edwin family, it was to be supposed Mr. Mansel would adopt their sentiments.

Dalton, I have informed my reader, wanted not cunning or penetration; the depravity of his own principles made him clearer sighted than his wife, the latter ever confided in the appearance of candour, and believed all professions made her with the most credulous simplicity.

Sutton appeared to her more than mortal with such powers, and such inclination to be of service to individuals, so little pride, and so much humanity blended in one character, was so different to any thing she had fancied of a great man, that not a suspicion to his disadvantage could possibly find its way into her mind.

Not so her husband—the attention of Lord Sutton, so constant and unsolicited, his extraordinary generosity, the beauty of Anna, and character of the man, which was too notorious to be a secret to any who chose to inquire, were strong reasons for close observation; and he had no kind of doubt, but his Lordship's views on Anna were more personal than he wished to be seen.

He

He considered himself in no degree answerable for the event; he wished heartily to get rid of a young woman on whom he could not look without feeling a kind of shame and self reproach, which by long habit had changed to hatred of the object that caused so disagreeable a sensation, without taking from his own family their all, it was now impossible to do her justice. Lord Sutton could not, therefore, more fervently wish to get possession of Anna, than Dalton to be freed from her. These thoughts, however, had too evil a source to be communicated to his wife; passive obedience and non-resistance he had long taught her, but her morals were yet good: avarice only had found its way into her mind, from his constantly preaching how necessary money was to the subsistence of children she fondly loved.—He had, indeed, been as particularly careful to guard every sentiment of his own which would lessen her confidence in his religious practice from her, as from the rest of the world, which, from her disposition was easy enough to effect: he, therefore, encouraged her great encomiums on Lord Sutton; nor was he himself backward in his acknowledgments; concluding with a hint highly pleasing to his Lordship, that if Anna continued her wicked unthankfulness of heart, he should not only discard her himself, but expect to be repaid the expence he had been at on her account.

This Christian resolution exhilarated the countenance of Sutton, and gave the wished-for explanation of the principles of the professor of religion:—they parted in mutual good humour, his lordship presenting Peggy with five guineas for the expences of the day.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLI.

A new Friend.

WE left Anna in the best hands—Mrs. Wellers, whose curiosity had carried her to Dalton's, found herself less satisfied, but more interested by what had passed during Edwin's visit—A train of reflections, the most melancholy and depressing, took such entire possession of my heroine, at the departure of that young man,—that Mrs. Wellers had twice bade her good morning, before she was sensible of any thing but her own gloomy ideas.

After some time, however, her eyes met those of that Lady, bent on her with a mixture of surprise and compassion, that at once confused and affected her:—the silent tears stole down her glowing cheeks:—again recollection of past events crowded on her imagination;—her agitation increased;—she turned pale; a sickness overpowered and rendered her an object truly affecting to the humane Mrs. Wellers, who assisted in soothing and recovering her, with a most delicate attention,—avoiding even to ask the cause. When Anna could recollect her wandering ideas, she respectfully apologised for the trouble she had given the lady, and thanked her for her kindness with an air of the strongest dejection.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wellers, feeling herself more and more interested, told her she would by no means leave her to such evil company as appeared to have taken possession of her, but insisted on taking her home to dinner, and insisted she should continue with her till the family returned from town.

Anna would have gladly excused herself from accepting her considerate invitation.—The evil company alluded to, were those she most wished to indulge;—but Mrs. Wellers was too pressing to be refused—and as she knew the Daltons paid great court to that lady, not only on account of her business, but of her influence, she concluded it would be improper to risque affronting her by a refusal; and indeed the whole of her conduct had been so kind, it was against her own feelings to do it;—accordingly Anna accompanied Mrs. Wellers home above a mile from the village.

Mr. Wellers was not at home, so that the day was spent with no other company; and the beauty and sweetness of our heroine in the course of it, were found to be her least perfections:—the education she had received, of which, in her situation at Dalton's, hardly any traces were discernible, now, in the society of a well-bred, sensible woman, was displayed with additional lustre, as it was wholly unexpected.

The ease and politeness of her behaviour and conversation, the modest display of her abilities, and the rectitude of her sentiments, equally pleased and surprized her new friend;—who (though she longed to know by what accident so lovely, and so accomplished a creature became an inmate with people so very inferior, in every discernible point, as those with whom she lived) forbore any kind of inquiries.

She had indeed gone to Dalton's with that intention, having no apprehensions of giving offence, where

where the offer of her services would so fully compensate for any transient mortifications. The journeywoman of a mantuamaker could not be thought to carry much sensibility about her:—but when she had spent one day with Anna, her respect increased with her liking, and she intreated, at parting, often to be favoured with her company.

During her walk home, the reflections which had been interrupted in the morning returned.

Miss Herbert had totally, she feared, deserted her, till Edwin's hint of a message had awakened hopes too acceptable to be conquered—She regretted incessantly the not giving him the desired conference—Yet the biller, which she was convinced was his, was certainly an indispensable reason for refusing it—but could a moment have been of consequence—Oh, yes, one moment would have exposed her to the reproaches of her own heart—*What* did that fond heart hanker after.

Miss Herbert was forbid corresponding or honouring her with notice;—and had she not declined receiving any favour from that young lady, through the medium of Mr. Edwin?—Could there be now a justifiable reason for altering her mind?—Alas, no! the latent cause of her involuntary regret she wished to conceal from herself—They would now be going to Wales; what would Mr. Mansel think of her being discharged from a family, on whose native justice and benevolence all who knew them depended: she had not yet wrote to that good man; how could she bear to wound his heart by a tale of distress he could not relieve?—She had hoped to have heard from Lady Edwin, how her misfortunes could have deprived her of so valuable a protection; and there were moments in which she resolved to write to that lady,—but a certain pride of conscious rectitude and innocence forbade it.

“ Why

“ Why should I sink,” said she, “ lower than my
“ fortunes? if I had injured Lady Edwin; if I
“ could accuse myself of one thought or act to-
“ wards her, unaccompanied with affection and
“ respect, no humiliation could be too great for
“ such an offence;---but as it is, Miss Edwin shall
“ not feed her family pride with my solicitations.”
But she would write to Mr. Mansel; he would
give her some information respecting those to whom
her heart involuntarily turned. She had hitherto
supported herself in the idea that her present situati-
on was unknown to young Herbert; but now she
found the wedding had taken place with all the show
and parade Lady Edwin from the first designed-----
she could not doubt he was there, and acquainted
with her disgrace.

Indeed if he was not, his correspondence with
his sister was regular and punctual, and it was not
probable, an event so remarkable, as that of her
being so suddenly discharged from the family, should
not have been communicated by her to him, more
especially when Miss Herbert was so good as to in-
terest herself in her fate—“ Alas!” cried she weeping,
“ he no longer remembers the wretched Anna; or
“ perhaps thinks on her with contempt---But what
“ have I done; how have I deserved this cruel re-
“ probation? Dearest Patty, have you too given up
“ your friend; do I live only in the memory of
“ my persecutors and enemies; is there on earth
“ so forlorn an outcast? Oh! if my parents could
“ look down on the grief of their unhappy orphan,
“ would they not lament the fate which preserved
“ my existence, since it is so marked by continual
“ distress; since every friend on whose compassion
“ my orphan state has found a claim, are either
“ prejudiced in my disfavour, or torn from me by
“ the ruthless hand of death.”

The tears which accompanied those reflections were freely indulged during her walk home: she entered Dalton's house with a pale face, swollen eyes, and a heart sunk in despair.

CHAP.

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C H A P. XLII.

Lost Reputation.

TO her infinite surprise, Anna found not one friendly countenance; Mrs. Dalton looked on her with anger, her husband with rage; and Miss Peggy, who was, in her own estimation, a foot taller for the compliments of the day, with contempt.

Wholly innocent of a thought of giving offence to any of them, she could form no reason for their ill humour, but having spent the day with Mrs. Wellers. She related that lady's visit, and her strong invitations to accompany her home;—but she was soon undeceived, and the grief that before occupied every thought, gave way to amazement and indignation, on being accused by Dalton in the lowest terms, of receiving the visits of a married man, who had left her in the heat of a quarrel, and wreaked his spite on old Mr. Bently, who had charged a constable with him—that the reason of her being discharged Lady Edwin's family was now evident—that her imprudence had rendered her the talk of the place, and involved him and his family, on whom she had no claim but charity, in her disgrace.

Anna, poor and distressed, was proud and innocent—such a charge, from a man who ought to have protected her from insult, was too much for her little share of philosophy; her heart, which had been softened by her sensibility, now became stout in her conscious integrity—With a calm determined voice, though her whole frame evinced her inward disorder—she demanded to know who it was that durst accuse her of the horrid things his unfeeling tongue had uttered.

“Innocent creature,” retorted he, provoked his anger had not struck dumb a person so dependent on him; “*You*, then, in the whole village, are only ignorant of what has happened; can you deny Mr. Edwin’s having visited you in our absence—by accident, to be sure—we will believe of that as much as we can.”

“I can no more, Sir,” answered Anna, “understand your language than I can develope your meaning. Mr. Edwin did certainly, as you say, visit me this morning; but why that should expose me to such indelicate treatment, you only can tell.”—“What business had he with you, Anna?” said Mrs. Dalton. “Will you say he came with the knowledge of the ladies of the family?” “I have not said that answered she, “nor any thing concerning his coming; his coming was as unexpected as unwelcome to me; Mrs. Wellers was here when he came, and was so good as to stay the whole time he continued. I know nothing of the quarrel you hint at; I had spent the day at the hill, but had I not so good a witness of my conduct, it would have been no cause of regret, as the last thing I could expect was to meet accusation from those who are bound in consideration of their own credit to have vindicated me from it.” And here the recollection of what would
have

have been Mr. Mansel's conduct on such an occasion, striking with the vivacity which generally accompanies the actions of people of warm passions, she told Mr. Dalton, that, "since he knew so little of her, she would no longer trespass on the *charity* he upbraided her with, but instantly return to Mr. Mansel, was it only to clear herself with respect to the motives that induced Lady Edwin to part with her."

This declaration by no means suited the Daltons—if Anna left them, what became of all the advantages their sanguine hopes had almost brought to a certainty from Lord Sutton? Peggy, indeed, tho' a very ordinary girl, had been so highly flattered in his compliment to her, that she gave it as her positive opinion his friendship for them was fixed: indeed, why should it not? What was there in Anna so particularly interesting which they could not plead for themselves with equal right? Mrs. Dalton joined her in saying, she thought Lord Sutton too good a man to think worse of them for the fault of Anna; but added, as she was an orphan, and friendless, that was a tie which they had not. Dalton delivered not his sentiments, but took a private resolution to inform his Lordship of what happened the next day; and in the mean time desired his wife to follow Anna up stairs, and endeavour to soften what had passed; inwardly resolving, if it was not his desire she should be detained, to repeat the affront, that she might indeed set off in anger, and rid him for ever of a perpetual source of disgust.

Mrs. Dalton found her in a situation that disarmed every idea of anger her husband's intelligence excited, for it was him who was told, and communicated to her the events of the day. Unlocking her trunk in order to pack up her things, the first thing that presented itself to Anna was a letter wrote by her departed friend; the tender and generous

sentiments it expressed, the praise bestowed, and the maternal love it contained, now wrung her heart. "Oh, my dear and only friend!" cried she in a transport of grief, "Why, why are you for ever lost to me? How little does it now avail to me to have cherished your instructions, to have made your perfect life the model of my actions. In the wide world have I not a single friend to do me common justice? Could you have thought your Anna would have lived to be charged with infamy?" In those exclamations on her knees, the open letter in her hand, and her face bathed in tears, she was found by Mrs. Dalton, whose good-nature immediately co-operating with her husband's desire, induced her to comfort and sooth her, whom ten minutes before, she had joined in reviling as the worst of criminals. Anna was soon appeased, but not happy: to find herself the talk of the place as a woman who received imprudent visits, cut her to the soul; and having inquired into the particulars of the affair, she found the reflections on herself proceeded entirely from what the servants had in their cups said at the inn, who made no scruple of attributing her discharge from the family to a criminal affair with their master; and that now the wedding was over, they supposed she was to be taken into keeping.

A scandal so void of the least foundation was the more provoking, as there was some parts of it out of her power at present to confute. Uncertain what step to take, and depressed beyond measure in her spirits, she could only lament her unhappy lot, and depend on the justice of providence to clear her fame; making, however, a strong resolution never to see Mr. Edwin again on any pretence whatever—no, not from Miss Herbert—and to take the first opportunity of leaving Mr. Dalton's.

Her

Her zeal for returning to Mr. Mansel now abated; could she think of burdening that good man with her trouble? Could she wish to involve him in disgrace and distress? What to her was now the opinion of the Herberts? If, as the servants alledged, she was discarded on account of Edwin, Charles would not be the last to hear a tale so injurious to her honour; his sister had certainly given her up—that indeed ceased to be matter of wonder when it was considered she too must have credited a story so calculated to destroy every bias of an uncorrupted mind.

Conscious that he had actually paid her his warm addresses at the very period he was entering into a matrimonial contract with Miss Turbville, she now reflected bitterly on her own want of discernment; since from that circumstance it was evident, however, disguised under the appearance of respect and delicacy, his views had the abandoned end so openly declared in his billet. She regretted not acquainting Lady Edwin, at the time, of all that had past; but those regrets now came too late—her good name that invaluable jewel of a woman, was hurt—innocence alone could not clear her character, and she had nothing else to oppose against the calumny so recently excited by the folly and imprudence of Mr. Edwin: sad as those reflections were, they were continually uppermost in her thoughts.

To return to Mr. Mansel she could not bear—to stay at Dalton's was worse: unknowing and unknown, what hope could she entertain of making more fortunate connections than those which had cost her so dear? Yet she was resolved to try; and for this purpose seriously began to cast about in her mind for some clue to guide her through the labyrinth before her.

Mrs. Wellers was the only person with whom she held common conversation out of Dalton's family since she had been at Layton; to her she resolved to apply, and, if necessary to open her whole mind. In this disposition she walked to the Hill the next morning; but not having the good fortune of meeting her at home, she left word she would call the next day.

CHAP.

C H A P. XLIII.

Containing Things of great Importance.

DALTON went, as he proposed, to Portland Place; if he wanted confirmation of his suspicions before, the change of countenance in Lord Sutton would have been sufficient,——rage, jealousy, and sorrow were, alternately, visible in a face, never tolerable, now absolutely hideous.

A volley of imprecations startled Dalton, and the furious Lord hardly could restrain himself from manually rewarding his intelligence; the affrighted Parson wished himself out of the house, and lost, in fears for his personal safety, all hopes of future advantages; however, a little thought on one side, and patience on the other, explained the sentiments of both. Lord Sutton made an apology for his warmth, which was very readily accepted by Dalton; they proceeded, therefore, to business with equal eagerness, and it was agreed, the noble Lord, should call, by accident, next morning, at the reverend teacher's house, to try, aided by the advice of her friends, to prevail on Anna to move out of the way of seduction, or if it was too late for that, to preserve her from the farther ill consequences of such an atrocious crime.

Lord Sutton's humanity carried him still farther; Mrs. Edwin was a charming woman, and deserving a better fate; he felt for her,—to rescue her from the misery of discovering the infidelity of her husband, and, at the same time, to remove from him the temptation of continuing to injure so fine a creature, was, as he assured Dalton, what he had most at heart; his praises were echoed with all that servility opulent vice ever receives from indigent sinners; and those sentiments which owed their origin to the most abandoned motives, attributed to the divine emanation of Christian benevolence and good will to the person he wished to destroy.

When Dalton had taken his leave, and Lord Sutton returned to his library, freed from the impertinence of observation, distracting as the idea was, it was but too probable that the sweet prize he had so long meditated the obtaining, was now for ever torn from him: the pangs of jealousy this thought gave, convinced him of what he did not like to believe; that his heart was now really attached; and that, *maugre* all that vanity could urge, it was without the least hope of return. So much he adored Anna, he now regretted he had not offered her marriage; but she had been so long at Lady Edwin's house, after her son arrived, before he had seen her, it would, perhaps, have been too late, then, to have obtained her unfulfilled hand; and however abandoned has been the life of a libertine, let his actions have been branded with every breach of the laws of honour, gratitude, or hospitality, let him have called the holy host of heaven to witness his perjuries, let beauty, innocence, and virtue have been his prey, be it remembered, such a character, though worn out with every vice to which human nature is liable in its most depraved state, expects he is yet entitled to the disinterested affections,

affections, the pure and unblemished heart of whatever happy she happens to strike his worn-out taste.

As the fond wish we are apt in our sanguine expectations to form leaves us, we are then, while hope and fancy plays around the imagination, fond of seizing on the next good thing to look forward to.

Thus, Anna, courted by Edwin, one of the handsomest young men of the age, if it was possible she had yet retained her virtue, would not, surely, yield to him; her old prejudices yet alive, perhaps, suspecting, what was truth, that he had helped to deprive her of her friends in Grosvenor-square, as well as Somersetshire.

This said expiring gallantry; but to be a lady, to make her mistress of him and his fate, was it in nature for her to refuse that? Yet to bestow himself and fortune on an orphan, a girl nobody knew, was all his intrigues to end in so inglorious a union; but then the charming image of Anna decked in jewels, ornamented by dress and equipage, rendering him the envy of all the young fellows of the age, arose in his idea, and banished from thence every mortifying retrospect of what had been, in the enchanting hope of what might yet be; and he determined, if he found her uncontaminated, pure, and worthy of so capital a piece of felicity, to offer her his hand.

Madame Frajan was announced in that instant; but a day before, this visit from the partner in his iniquity would have been the most acceptable thing that could have happened, at present it was rather *mal-a-propos*. However she was too deep in his secrets to be affronted, she was therefore admitted—Her lengthened face and meaning eyes convinced him there was something to be told; but curiosity

had

had now little room in a heart totally absorbed in the delightful ideas of possessing the most lovely of women.

Frajan was too full of her errand to observe this change ; and having prefaced her story by desiring now to remind him of what she had frequently asserted, that tho' the English women possessed not that noble frankness which rendered the gallantry of French ladies more conspicuous, they were none of them averse to intrigue :—The demure little Anna, for instance, though she wanted penetration and taste to suffer his Lordship to initiate her into the soft passion, had not been so cruel to Mr. Edwin, by whom she was now actually kept. This intelligence delivered partly with reproach and partly with spight, found not such credit with Lord Sutton as some others of that lady's invention, with his aid, had done from the family she served.

He knew the last part to be false, as well as many other things laid to the charge of Anna ; but the case was now altered, the injuries done to the character of a deserted orphan might not, perhaps, become necessary to clear Lady Sutton from ; as the blemishes, which would ruin the one, and deprive her of the means of procuring an honest subsistence would be lost in the affluence and dignity of the other. But yet there were some few obligations our heroine owed to the invention of him and his associate, Madame Frajan, which it would be, by no means convenient Anna should be acquainted with, at least while it was out of her power to acknowledge them as they deserved.—But for this consideration, the league betwixt those two worthy friends would have been instantly dissolved, as it had never yet happened that he had set the least regard on any one person longer than he could in some shape or other make them subservient

vient to his interest, or dropped with the least reluctance any one who had done him the last good office in their power.

His Lordship had now no thought of his fair emissary, but how to cast on her the odium of every injury done Anna by their joint means.

Cooly, therefore, he assured her, she had been misinformed, that he was better acquainted with Anna's situation and sentiments, and believed the first was reputable, the latter untainted.—The air that accompanied this declaration struck poor Frajan dumb; Lord Sutton turned the friend of Anna, then must he be inevitably her enemy, since if admitted to her conversation, discoveries must be made which *she* could not stand the brunt of. However, one consolation remained, she had likewise discoveries in her power, which, on occasion, she was determined to make use of. Female spite required this piece of justice, on a man who had, from the beginning, deceived even her; and his suffering her to depart without the accustomed douceur, which she always reckoned on as her undoubted perquisite, contributed not a little to the vindictive spirit in which she left him.

Lord Sutton, full of his intended project, and the happiness he expected to result from his deep-laid scheme, paid little regard to the suddenness of her exit; one difficulty now struck him which was, how to get rid of his two sultanas; the one in the house with him was a poor, spiritless, meek creature, whose whole pleasure centered in the children she had by a tender and worthy deceased husband;—his pleasures or pursuits were equally uninterrupted by her: indeed, in his opinion, she was but one degree removed from idiotism; he promised himself to part with her without the least trouble or expence: at present, the honesty of her disposition, and the œconomy which
(though

(though reduced from very promising expectations) had always been her practice, made her a very valuable manager in his family. Profusion and meanness are very nearly allied; nothing that could feed his pride or vanity, nothing that could contribute to the gratification of his appetite of any sort was thought much of by him;—but though from a scene of imposition, waste, and expence, Mrs. Villers had established order and regularity, and consequently his house-keeping bills was one half reduced, her accounts were sure to meet a thousand faults, nor even settled without being reminded of the value of money, of the poverty from which he had relieved her, and the distress she must be again exposed to if deprived of his protection.

The settled unchangeable countenance with which those harangues were received, contributed not a little to confirm his notions of her stupidity; he had but, therefore, to turn her out when it was convenient; but the woman he kept at Bath, who was the same on his first return from India; he had in the parade of his wealth and oriental consequence established a first-rate courtesan, who dared do any thing she took into her head, and who, by threats and cunning, had contrived to be supported in splendour, by a man who entertained not the least inclination for her, and indeed who never had—How should he do with her?

One certain plague which attends old rakes and coquettes, is the mortification sure to be inflicted at every hint of decrease of their powers; it was a plague particularly tormenting to Sutton; it was his very sore place; Charlotte Madan knew every weak point about him, and the art of turning her knowledge to an advantage, was what she was by no means deficient in. Our hero stood so much in awe of this charming appendage to his state, that
though

though the house and establishment at Bath were elegant and expensive ; and though the waters of that delightful place were allowed to be the most salutary for constitutions broken by long residence in a hot climate ; it was the place he was least seen at. For this piece of self denial he had two excuses, business in winter, and indisposition in summer ; and provided his charmer had been of the party, he would have fairly compounded with any one, to take the whole at a very cheap rate off his hands.

His heart recoiled the moment Charlotte came across his memory ; had he been going to be united to a modern woman of fashion, a large jointure and double pin money would have silenced the scruples of a fashionable belle, who, contented to lead on her own set, would not perhaps have been offended at her husband's kept Mistress's claiming the same advantage in her's.

But the purity of the mind of Anna, and the old-fashioned notions she inherited from Mrs. Mansel, would, he well knew, shrink from such an idea ; to get rid of Charlotte, therefore, was indispensably necessary ; but how, was another thing too difficult to be directly determined on. Banishing, therefore, such an unpleasant subject, again he indulged himself in contemplating the charms of his future bride, in figuring to himself the serenity of his life with such a companion, and in furnishing his mind with arguments to combat his misgiving, on account of Edwin.

C H A P. XLIV.

The Disappointment.

NEXT morning carried him to Layton. Dalton and his family were dressed, in expectation of the honor he did them; but Anna was not of the party; a circumstance that gave him no disquiet, as he was glad of the opportunity to inquire if any thing farther had transpired, relating to the supposed connection with Edwin.

He was overjoyed to hear from Mrs. Dalton, she was convinced, as far as related to Anna, it was totally void of foundation; he only wanted this to induce him to open his intention, which he did, with all the parade and ostentation his heart abounded in, at the same time making a full display of the extreme generosity of his motives, in waving every consideration of birth and fortune, to make himself the legal protector of a destitute young creature, who must else fall a prey to the wicked intrigues of the libertine age.—The surprise of the Daltons is not to be described at this declaration, nor their joy, at the connection they had an opportunity of forming by so eligible a match for their ward, who would now be sure amply to repay all the kindness she was supposed

supposed to receive from their hands :—in the fullness of their hearts they complimented the noble lord, and they congratulated each other ; his goodness they extolled to the skies ; while the aspiration of their own hopes seemed to follow his exultation.

When full two hours had been employed, to the mutual satisfaction of the visitor and visited, his Lordship expressed his wish to be admitted to the sight of his intended bride : she had gone out before breakfast, and was not returned ; her acquaintance was so small in the village, it was easy to trace it ; the maid was therefore dispatched to Mrs. Wellers', with Mrs. Dalton's request she would immediately come home. The girl returned with answer, that Miss Mansel breakfasted with Mrs. Wellers, who had taken her with her to town in the carriage, but that they were expected back to dinner :—Sutton was disappointed and angry : who the d—l is this Wellers, said he, and why do you suffer her to go out alone ? —Dalton satisfied him as to the propriety of her companion, and both promised, till they had the honour of delivering her into his own hands, she never more should go out of their sight.—This promise hardly pacified him :—he was dressed, both himself and equipage, to attract all eyes ; armed at all points, he had flattered himself he was irresistible ; it was, therefore, with extreme regret he gave up the expectation of seeing her that day ; yet to wait her return, and again send for her, would be opening his address, which, notwithstanding his great vanity, he had some serious fear about—in rather an awkward way, he was therefore obliged to postpone this weighty affair ; and, charging Dalton with his compliments &c. he told him, he should write to her as soon as he got

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to town.—the carriage being then ordered to draw to the door, with half the town round it in a full gaze, affecting an air of humility and good humour, after bowing to the doffed hats of the mob, he was drawn off.

During the time his carriage was in waiting, the young distiller I have before mentioned passed the house; and meeting a neighbour, who had the honour of mixing medicines for the infirm in that and the adjacent villages, the distiller ready to burst with the importance of his own ideas, observed the extreme elegance of the vis-a-vis, and, with a sneer, supposed Miss would be for cutting as great a figure as the Bird of Paradise. The doctor was a man of good understanding, and a tolerable share of professional knowledge; but having met, in his domestic circle, some embarrassment, which called on the utmost exertions of industry to counteract, he had very little knowledge of the world, with which Mr. Bibbins assured him he was perfectly acquainted; what, therefore, was that gentleman's meaning, when he spoke of the Bird of Paradise, he could not conceive.

The young gentleman in pity to his ignorance, told him it was in high life a courtesan; that the girl at the Parson's was of the same stamp, as he himself had often seen her in places where he and people of the genteel sort resorted; places, indeed, that required dress, (viewing with no small self approbation, the pink knee strings that adorned the upper part of his pretty legs, and heels of the same colour that terminated that lovely part of his charming person) besides the money it cost to get into them.

“And how came this lady to condescend, then, in the full bloom of youth and beauty to leave those gay connections?” asked the Doctor—
“Oh, God! how ignorant you are,” returned
“Bib-

“ Bibbins, of life : why these sort of folks have
“ all their ups and downs—that, now, is the
“ Duke of L——’s carriage ; he visits her incog.
“ only, till she has obtained a settlement from a
“ rich Welch Squire, who is married and wants
“ to get rid of her.”

A young man of plain, but genteel appearance, whose attention seemed to be taken with the same gaudy object, asked Mr. Bibbins if he was sure he was not mistaken, as the coronet was not ducal.—Another opportunity now offered for the display of his knowledge of great folks in the person of the stranger ; he answered with an air of positive assurance, that he knew his Grace perfectly well, that he had great dealings amongst ministers, and them there sort of folks ; that the prime minister often sent for and consulted both him and his father on affairs of state ; and it was impossible he could be mistaken in any of the Lords or Dukes of the Court ; because why, he often and often had been there ; and his own uncle, Sir Gilbert Mushroom, had been knighted. Proofs like these, were damning ones ; indeed they were unanswerable, or at least unanswered by the young stranger, whose involuntary sighs, turned the attention both of the Doctor and young Bibbins from the equipage at the door to the person whose emotions it visibly excited.

There was something in him that raised a good-natured curiosity in the Doctor. To Bibbins he was a bore ; and having in his remark of the coronet shewn a superior knowledge to the beau, was directly concluded by him to be a herald painter and a low fellow—Now though in the practice of that art, if he had by any kind of means contrived to acquire a fortune, or without one, could dress so vastly well as he, Mr. Bibbins, did ; there was nothing that could or ought to have shocked his nicety—but the plainness of his appearance, a dejected

jected turn of countenance, and fallen cheeks, were objects that at once bringing his own opposite perfections in view, inspired him with sovereign contempt: turning, therefore, on his heel, humming Tally ho, without any ceremony he walked off, leaving the doctor and stranger still in view of Dalton's door, the latter with fixed attention there, and the former as fixedly observing him.

Doctor Collet, I have said, was too much engaged in the concerns of his family and patients, to be very conversant in the great world; and it is the constant practice in small country places, the embarrassments of his domestic circle had been so perversely handled by the good natured idlers of the village, that his wife dying of a consumption, he had been set down as her actual murderer by one half, and (a woman, whose natural peevish and refractory disposition had not only banished peace from her own bosom, but her habitation) sanctified, as the very best creature in the world, by the other.

The Doctor's pride on one hand, and the particularity of his disposition on the other, always prevented his explanation, which, like Sterne's Yorick, he could have made in his own favour, and had well nigh lost all his female patients, as well as his character, before he dreamed of either being in danger; when, however, he found the predicament in which he stood, two methods only offered; one was, by going round the families who had been prejudiced against him, and exposing, not only the follies, but the vices of the dead, and endeavour to recover his lost ground; the other, retrench the expences of his house, and rely on his unimpeached skill for as much business as would barely support him, and leave the neighbourhood to their own opinions; this was the least trouble, and this he adopted, devoting all his leisure to study and chemical whims, and encouraging

ing a disposition to despise mankind ; but as this sourness of heart was more the effect of habit and necessity, than principle or choice, the natural good nature and philanthropy of his soul sometimes broke out through the mist of contracted petulance ; and as in the present instance, his heart yearned with good-will to his fellow creatures.

But though he was so obdurate to the calls of curiosity in his own affairs, no person living could be more interested in those of other people, or take greater pains to make himself acquainted with the causes as well as effects of every occurrence in and about his own village ; nor was he, to do him justice, a bit sparing of the intelligence so industriously procured ? dispensing liberally at the one house all that occurred at the other, sometimes seasoned with a little of the acrimony of his own feelings, and that without the least intention of injuring any individual, but merely to indulge himself in the exhibition of his talents, and for *those* he happily entertained a very great respect ; really unconscious, though so great a sufferer in his own character, of the mischief his eternal gossiping produced, he was the first to condemn the practice he adopted, and as ready to contradict any report, though circulated by himself, when convinced of its falsity, as to enforce its credit, when sure of its being true.

What could he possibly sigh for ? What could the girl be to him ? he would give the world to know—but curiosity, powerful as was its influence on the mind of Dr. Collet, was ever vanquished by humanity ; a sudden paleness which overspread the face of the stranger, the evident distress of his looks, and his interesting appearance, altogether excited his attention and respect ; he entreated him to go home with him to his house, which was within sight—the offer was accepted

cepted with a polite freedom, and a few moments served to settle a very good understanding between the Doctor and his new acquaintance, who acknowledged that it was of the utmost importance to him to know every particular concerning Anna Mansel. A firm promise in return was given by Collet, to make it his business to inform him of all he could learn; gratifying at once, by their league, his two favourite, though contradictory, pursuits, curiosity and good-nature; on which errand he immediately sallied out.

CHAP.

C H A P. XLV.

The Morning Visit.

WITH Dalton, Collet had no acquaintance ; that good man had a mortal aversion to physical bills, nor would ever suffer one to be incurred in his family : but he had heard of Bently's affair, and Bibbins' account of Anna was a confirmation that the report then spread was but too true ; however, he was resolved to be something better informed, if possible, and as he had the honour of attending the family of Mr. Justice Strap, he took occasion to call with a How d'ye ? on his lady.

There he met, on a similar visit to the Miss Straps, Miss Bibbins, the young lady I have before introduced as a person perfectly acquainted with the bad character of our heroine ;—Doctor Collet was nobody ; he, therefore, was no interruption to that young lady's volubility, who continued her account of a dress which seemed to have made no small disturbance in her ideas.

“ The flounce, if you will believe me, ma'am,
“ was near half a yard deep, of the finest corded
“ muslin, put on as thick as it was possible—the
“ train, though looped up, I am sure was of a
“ monstrous length ; why, dear me, mamma says
“ it is not a little pays for those things ; then
“ ma'am,

“ ma’am, her linen is so fine—and it is a shame
 “ to see the lace she wears—besides she certainly
 “ paints.”—“ That is very evident,” answered
 “ the eldest Miss Strap—“ I am astonished Mrs.
 “ Wellers can take up with such trumpery.”—
 “ Oh, as to that, my dear,” answered Mrs.
 “ Strap, “ it is easily accounted for ; Mrs. Wel-
 “ lers, you know, takes on her to lead us all—
 “ and perhaps she may hope to introduce this
 “ minx by way of shewing her power ; some
 “ folks who are very well themselves, may fancy
 “ what they please, but there are folks whose
 “ characters are of consequence.

“ Certainly, ma’am,” said Miss Bibbins, “ that
 “ is what my mamma says ; and besides, as she
 “ says, the thing is past doubt ; for how could
 “ such a girl as that wear about in her common
 “ dress, things that are so expensive and out of
 “ character for her ; besides, her affectation of
 “ modesty, shunning the eyes of men, nothing is
 “ easier, than to see that is all a farce---I have no
 “ patience with such creatures.”

“ This,” replied Mrs. Strap, “ is one of the
 “ blessed effects of Mr. Thornhill’s establishing
 “ his meeting here ; I will assure you, I think it
 “ very hard the Miss Straps and you, Miss Bib-
 “ bins, and the other young ladies of the place,
 “ cannot walk out without being shocked by the
 “ sight of a kept woman.”

Collet had sat with some degree of impatience,
 in hope of hedging in a word, by way of gaining
 the intelligence he sought after, till the last part of
 the conversation ; when understanding, what he
 had at first no suspicion of, that Miss Mansel was
 the subject of it, he became not only attentive,
 but, by just asking a question now and then, when
 a pause of the fair declaimers would suffer him, he
 learned that Miss Mansel was a vile young wo-
 man ;

man; that she had seduced the affections of the lady's son she served, though she then knew he was under engagement to be married to a young heiress of fashion; that he had turned her off; and that she was now making use of every artifice to procure a settlement from him, by threatening to disclose the affair to his lady; and that she was privately visited by more than one gentleman *now*, though they could not positively think what attractions she had:---but men, Miss Bibbins observed, had very strange tastes.

So much for the account at the worshipful Mr. Strap's, who corroborated the whole by reciting, in his own way, the adventure of the horsewhip, making no secret of the gentleman's name, though he had pledged his word it should not be known. Having thus succeeded beyond his expectations, Collet took his leave.

The ladies he parted from assured him of the truth of every tittle he had heard: but there was one circumstance weighed against all they could say about our heroine, and that was, the favors shewn her by Mrs. Wellers; that lady by the uprightness of her own character, and the benevolence of her sentiments, had actually arrived at the happy perfection of keeping in awe her enemies, as well as being adored by her friends, and universally respected by people whose understanding and principles rendered their respect of value: to couple infamy and Mrs. Wellers together, was a union which could never strike Collet; he knew and revered her; and it was not in the power of Justice Strap, his amiable wife, his charming daughters, or their good friend Miss Bibbins, to convince him Anna Mansel was a bad woman, when the next breath added she was at the Hill: he hesitated, as he came out of Mr. Strap's gates, whether he should return to his new friend, or by

walking, or rather hobbling, being much afflicted with the gout, to Mrs. Wellers', where he might reasonably hope to hear some extenuation of the facts so roundly asserted at Justice Strap's.

When Collet did any thing without consideration, it often appeared, and perhaps sometimes was, from a sudden splenetic fit which looked too like ill-nature; but if he took a moment's thought, if he hesitated, let the trouble, expence or fatigue, be ever so great, provided it was not in his own concern, good nature, justice, and humanity were sure to conquer;—and he was creeping up the green to Hill-house, before he had suffered a second thought to obtrude, besides that pleasing one, inspired with a love of truth. This was not one of Anna's lucky days: Mrs. Wellers, as I before said, had taken her to town; and the disappointment reminded Collet of his gouty toes; he had all the way to walk back, and, what was worse, no better for the journey, which in the return was painful and fatiguing. He found the stranger impatiently waiting for him, and briefly related all he had heard; not however suffering the fretful fit, then on him, to hinder his likewise telling his own more favourable thoughts.

My reader will perhaps have anticipated the discovery I am going to make of the inquisitive stranger:—it was indeed Charles Herbert, who, after making ten thousand resolutions to forget the owner of the breastbow, could think of nothing else; and who broke, in his excursion to Layton, as many vows he had made never to inquire after her; and who now felt that, worthless, and even abandoned, as he had every reason to believe Anna, it was not in his nature to cease loving her.

Collet, gouty, poor, and a humorist, was at that very time a lover; not a despairing one, for the object

object of his affections was far from being out of the reach of his pursuit; not a successful one, for his diffidence in his own merits was unconquerable; nor did he guard the secret of his passion with more care from the ridicule of his acquaintance, than from the knowledge of *her* who inspired it; but he was a lover, and consequently very easily saw the situation of Herbert.

Glad of any discovery, and very much pleased with his new friend, he readily promised to have a constant eye on Anna, and to communicate to him every thing that occurred concerning her; they parted with mutual professions of friendship. Herbert, though his heart was bursting with love and despair, when he left Layton, felt a gleam of consolation from Collet's promised correspondence.

C H A P. XLVI.

A second Plan for Female Education.

ANNA's interest in the affection of the worthy woman, to whose advice she wisely resolved to submit herself, was hourly increasing: she had been received at the Hill with that open friendship, which not only encourages but demands our confidence; she therefore found no difficulty from the innate modesty of her sentiments, when so kindly encouraged, but told Mrs. Wellers, without the least reserve, her whole history, not concealing a single event which presented itself to her recollection, excepting only the feelings of her heart towards young Herbert.

The many changes in the life of so young a creature; the enemies she had so undeservedly met; her destitute infancy, and present uncomfortable situation, were so many arguments in favour of the partiality Mrs. Wellers felt for her; that she promised not only to consider her affairs, but give every assistance and advice in her power; and, *à propos*, said she, I am going to town this morning, and will take you to my daughter's, where we will consult what can be done for so amiable a girl.

Anna's

Anna's gratitude was not given to words, the tears which Mrs. Wellers affectionately wiped off, spoke its own language, and they went to town in Mrs. Weller's coach.

Young Mrs. Wellers, was, I have before said, a plain, good woman; the large fortune she had brought her husband intitled her to every indulgence a prudent woman could wish for. She was devoted to her children, and her pride was that of making them (they were all girls) the most accomplished women of the age. She was herself the only daughter of a very covetous rich old man, to whose penury it was owing that his daughter regretted perpetually her confined education:—Not one of the accomplishments she beheld in other ladies of her rank in the world had been taught her; but from the moment she became a mother, she was resolved her children should profit by her misfortune—and the whole of her time was dedicated to the watching over the education of her daughters.

Unread and unexperienced, it will not be wondered if this disposition, amiable as it was, carried her into the opposite extreme: her avarice of instruction for them was visible in all her furniture and apartments; globes, books, frames, musical instruments, stocks, collars and swings, were not confined to one or two rooms, her house was a seminary of female learning; and the humble rap at the door all the morning, announced the arrival of the different instructors. The dancing step sometimes preceded the dismissal of the back string, and they knew the *a* and *bé* of the French long before they had an idea of the English alphabet.

Without either ear or voice Mrs. Wellers determined her daughters should be proficient in music: and with capacities which rendered it difficult for them to receive an idea of the four quarters of the globe, they were expected to excel in geographical

knowledge. Work, indeed, was out of her system: embroidery, quadrille baskets, cutting of paper, and other trifles of a trifling age, indeed, were the only employments it was necessary should engage their attention, but not even of them did she make any point.

Her mother-in-law saw with the eyes of indulgence the excess to which this passion of her daughter carried her; she was most respectfully attended to on every other subject, but her remonstrances were so ill-received on this, she prudently declined repeating them; and rather sought to dress in an amiable light, what to herself appeared a weakness in her daughter.

The accomplishments and abilities of Anna struck in a particular manner, as capable of being of more real advantage to her grand children, than the laboured instructions of the different masters who attended them; at least they would be more likely to catch the manners of a gentlewoman from her (whose native grace and politeness spoke her fit to adorn any rank) than the hired foreign servants about them. There was but one difficulty that she foresaw would be a hard one to surmount; which was, her knowing so little of the French language—it was therefore that she did not explain her intentions in taking her to town.

When they arrived in Charter-house square, Mrs. Wellers immediately ascended to the third floor, which was entirely devoted to the young ladies: the masters and attendants, mother and daughters, were all engaged. In one room the music master was giving his instructions; in another the globes were displayed; in the third a pretty little girl was practising a *pas seul*; and in a large detached closet, another (overlooked by mamma) was attempting a landscape, attended by a French governess and two maids of the same nation.

Grand-

Grandmamma's arrival immediately made a little holiday—the children hung round her, while their mamma was likewise expressing the pleasure this visit gave her. The two ladies soon retired, leaving Anna much amused and surprized at a sight so new; she sat down to the harpsichord with that avidity and pleasure a lover of music, who has long been deprived of an instrument, only can conceive. Her execution and taste, I have before said, was beyond her instructions or opportunities. The master, who was not yet gone, paid her many compliments on her performance; and she was so delighted with the opportunity of resuming her favourite amusement, that the ladies who were an hour absent, when they returned found her lost in her own harmony.

The intermediate time had been spent by the benevolent Mrs. Wellers in introducing to her son and daughter in the most favourable and amiable light the orphan she had promised to befriend.

Mr. Wellers was a plain, honest, moral man, whose feelings were regulated by his ideas of justice; the integrity of his dealings were universally known, but he was not more regular in his books and accounts than in his inclinations:—He behaved with friendship and affection to his wife, and gave his whole time and attention to the interest of his family:—increasing his fortune for their advantage, he reckoned all the fondness incumbent on a father.

What warmth there was about him was more particularly towards his parents—whose generosity in parting with their all for his establishment, was by him called confidence in his credit; and that is a sort of obligation men of business never forget. One regular mode of life carried him thro' the year. At one hour you was sure to find him at breakfast, at the Bank, at Change, and at dinner.

The

The evening he gave to his wife, and Sunday to his parents. But it was equally out of the nature of things to work him up into an act of benevolence, or prevail on him to be guilty of one of oppression. His sensibility neither hurt his own peace, or affected that of other people. His mother's example, as far as it taught him rigid probity, had its effect; but the softness and humanity, the warmth of friendship, and the entire love of virtue which softened her whole soul, she had not the happiness to see actuate the sentiments of her son.

With an attention his respect for her had enforced, he heard her commendation of Anna; and when his wife, charmed at his mother's account of her abilities, though sensibly mortified at her deficiency in the language so necessary for her daughters, asked his approbation of her being taken as governess into the house, in his usual stile he gave way to their opinions; slightly observing, the world was so deceitful, he supposed Mrs. Wellers would inform herself of the truth of the story she had been repeating. She had, she said, no kind of doubt of the least tittle; but, however, as character to be sure should be the first recommendation in the situation to which she proposed placing her young friend, she was sure Anna would object to no inquiries proper to be made at Lady Edwin's.

Things being in this happy train for our heroine, Mrs. Wellers returned with her to Layton without having said any thing of her plan till they were returning in the carriage from town, when she explained the nature of the service she meant to do her; at the same time telling her, if the children were happy enough to engage her affection, as well as care, the obligation would be all on their side, since she was sure her example and society

ciety would be of the most serious advantage to them.

Anna was overwhelmed with gratitude—but diffident of her abilities to undertake what to her appeared a task of such consequence, restrained the lively and animated expressions of it which filled her gentle bosom, she frankly confessed her doubts of herself ; those doubts were the surest proofs of her capability ; and the good-natured Mrs. Wellers only found the stronger reasons to congratulate herself on such an acquisition. With respect to the inquiries necessary to be made in Grosvenor square, it was a matter of joy, conscious of the purity of her conduct ; and having told her friend every circumstance respecting young Edwin, and the conclusions thrown on it by the Daltons, she had nothing to fear ; on the contrary, it would explain a matter that had hitherto been so deep a mystery, and perhaps once more enable her to see her dear Miss Herbert. She might yet know how fate would dispose of her brother—she therefore not only consented with alacrity, but urged Mrs. Wellers to go the next day. Her desires were too agreeable to that lady's own wish, not to be complied with. When they alighted at the Hill they were told of Mrs. Dalton's message ; and Anna, fearing she might be indisposed, begged leave to go home directly ; which, however, she was not permitted to do till evening.



